

# Catch the spirit!

# Back to school with

# *Degrassi Junior High*

## Inside

- The inside scoop on the teen actors in *DJH*
- How good a friend are you?
- Escaping your older brother or sister's reputation
- Sneakermania
- The rights of teenage parents
- Party tips
- Getting the perfect job

**DEGRASSI**  
New season begins *Junior High*  
December 1988 on PBS



Presented on PBS by WGBH Boston

**The gang is back for a new year  
and sixteen new shows, beginning in  
December on public television.**

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### Videos, Discussion Guides, and Books

Videocassettes of *DJH* episodes are available for rental or purchase. For information, contact:

Direct Cinema  
P.O. Box 69799  
Los Angeles, CA 90069-9976  
(213) 652-8000

Three Discussion and Activity Guides are available. Guide I covers last season's episodes 1 to 13. Guide II covers last season's episodes 14 to 26, and Guide III covers this season's new episodes 1 to 16. Specify the guide you want (I, II, or III), and send a check or money order for \$2 per guide to:  
Degrassi Junior High  
Discussion and Activity Guide  
Box 2222-DG  
South Easton, MA 02375  
(617) 963-8666

*Exit Stage Left*, a novel by William Ptasnak based on *Degrassi Junior High*, is available from Scholastic, Inc. In addition, a series of books about adolescent issues addressed by the television programs can be ordered from:

H. P. Kopplemann, Inc.  
140 Van Block Ave.  
P.O. Box 145  
Hartford, CT 06141

Additional copies of this newspaper can be ordered for \$1 per copy (or \$10 for a set of 25) from:

Degrassi Junior High  
Student Newspaper  
Box 2222-DG  
South Easton, MA 02375  
(617) 963-8666



## DEGRASSI

*Junior High*

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### Endorsements

*Degrassi Junior High* has been endorsed by the American Association of School Administrators, American Federation of Teachers, American Youth Work Center, National Education Association, National Middle School Association, National Resource Center for Middle Grades Education, and Search Institute.

### Awards

*Degrassi Junior High* has won numerous awards, including an International Emmy, Action for Children's Television Award, Parents' Choice Award, Gemini Award, American Film & Video Festival Blue Ribbon, Banff Television Festival Award, and Television Critics Association Award.

## About the TV Show

# A new year at Degrassi

The second season of *Degrassi Junior High* premieres during the week of December 10 with a one-hour special. Since each public television station broadcasts the program at a different day and time, check your local TV listings or call your public TV station to find out when it airs where you live.

Below are summaries of the plots for this season's new episodes.

### Episode 1 and 2 — Can't Live With 'Em

The *Degrassi* gang is back at school. Joey is still stuck in the eighth grade, Arthur is acting a little strangely, and the ninth graders are getting a taste of high school. Wheels, who has been having a tough time with his parents, has a tougher time without them after they are killed in a car accident. Spike, no longer pregnant, has new problems to deal with.

### Episode 3 — A Big Girl Now

Lucy's in love, but having a boyfriend doesn't leave much time for her old pal L. D. Paul has some expectations that Lucy is concerned about, but she thinks she can handle them.

### Episode 4 — Season's Greetings

It doesn't feel like Christmas. For one thing, it's boiling hot in the cafeteria because the school's furnace is on the blink. And Arthur and Yick are fighting. Dorothy does her best to patch it up but it's only after they start remembering all the things they've been through together that things start to look up.

### Episode 5 — Loves Me, Loves Me Not

Caitlin knows he's not her type, but she can't help liking Joey. And Joey figures he can use all the help he can get to get through eighth grade this time. Alexa tries to give Michelle some help getting to know B. L. T. — with unexpected results. And Dorothy, Arthur's cousin, has developed a crush on Yick.

### Episode 6 — He Ain't Heavy

When Snake's all-star big brother comes home from medical school for a surprise visit, Snake is thrilled. But Glenn has some unexpected news to tell the family, and Snake isn't sure he can handle it. Meanwhile, Joey continues his quest for fame and fortune by taking The Zit Remedy's tape to CRAZ radio.

### Episode 7 — The Whole Truth

Caitlin, this year's newspaper editor, finds a hot issue to write about when Liz organizes a protest for animal rights. But she soon learns there are two sides to every story. Scooter and Bartholomew order sea creatures from a comic book, but they're not quite what they expected.

*Degrassi Junior High* is a television series for you — teens. The shows deal with things you think about, cry about, laugh about, and care about.

### Episode 8 — Star-Crossed

Erica likes Clutch, but he invites Heather to a bowling tournament. No problem — they'll just switch. Things are not working out between Alexa and B. L. T., and she decides she wants Simon back.

### Episode 9 — Food for Thought

Kathleen and Melanie, despite their falling out, are forced to work together on their Science Fair project. Melanie is having an even harder time dealing with Kathleen because she hasn't been eating lately. Erica and Heather are working on a project on eating disorders, and they begin to worry about Lucy.

### Episode 10 — Twenty Bucks

Melanie is ecstatic when Snake invites her to go to the Gourmet Scum concert, dutch treat. The only problem is, where will she get the money? Joey makes a bet that he can get a date for Saturday night, but finds it's harder than he thought — and Caitlin isn't thrilled when she finds out she wasn't his first choice.

### Episodes 11 and 12 — Taking Off

This two-part show will focus on Wheels, who is still having a hard time dealing with his parents' death. He runs away from home, but finds that it doesn't necessarily mean leaving his problems behind.

### Episode 13

When Arthur's dad spends more and more time with his girlfriend, Arthur feels left out. The final straw comes when his father considers getting remarried. Meanwhile, Michelle and B. L. T. plan a dinner date.

### Episodes 14 through 16

These shows were not finalized by press time, but the stories will pick up the threads of Wheels, Spike, and the Joey/Caitlin romance. The last episode will likely include graduation.

ED NOTE: Since many of the programs were still in production at press time, some titles and story lines may change.



# Letters to *Degrassi*

## Dear Degrassi:

As a viewer of *Degrassi Junior High*, I feel that the subjects involved and how they are handled are superb.

I really understood the way L. D. felt when her father went into the hospital. About a week before I saw the *Degrassi Junior High* show entitled "Nothing to Fear," my grandmother went into the hospital with a very bad heart disorder. My grandmother is just about the greatest asset in my life, and I couldn't stand to lose her.

I felt unhappy, not just because she might be dying, but because one of my close relatives died and I never got to say goodbye. Having a fear of hospitals, I hated to be there, but I had to go see my grandmother. The sight of her with those heart monitors and tubes running in and out of her frightened me, and at times I didn't want to see her. After seeing "Nothing to Fear," I had a more relaxed feeling while visiting her. She came out of the hospital fine, and thanks to *Degrassi Junior High* I helped my grandmother through her stay there.

*Degrassi Junior High* is a very well-written and casted program. There is a part of me that is like Stephanie or Voula or any student that stars in *Degrassi Junior High*. That's what I like about watching it — there's something in it for everyone.

A. J. G.  
Newport, North Carolina

## Dear Degrassi:

I'm writing to tell you what a wonderful job you're doing and to keep it up! I'm 17 years old and I have a 3-year-old daughter, Tiffany. I wanted you to know that your show is excellent on all the issues an adolescent faces. My 14-year-old sister watches you now and she loves it. I hope (and I know it will) it teaches her not to make the same mistake I made, by having sex at an early age.

I became pregnant when I was 14, just like Spike on *Degrassi*. She does a wonderful job (so does everyone else!) of getting the message across that it's not worth it to have sex. Shane does a wonderful job too. Fathers have a big part of it. I'm not so lucky. My boyfriend ran out on me and now I'm taking him to court.

Once again, keep up the great work! I hope you're on for a very long time!

L. W.  
Linden, New Jersey

## Dear Degrassi:

I am very thankful to *Degrassi Junior High* for the many lessons it has taught me. I feel that *Degrassi* has helped me through some of the hard times I go through.

*Degrassi* is very realistic, unlike many other shows. I think *Degrassi* helps kids understand that the problems they have are normal, and they are not the only ones with these problems. Kids our age need to have something like *Degrassi* to fully understand life in our eyes and in the eyes of others. They need to know how to handle pressures such as smoking and drinking. I know some of my friends smoke and drink, but after looking at *Degrassi*, I realized that it wasn't for me. *Degrassi* helped me make the right choice.

I hope that *Degrassi Junior High* continues on through next year. Thanks again for making life a little easier!

H. H.  
Morehead City, North Carolina

## Ask Degrassi

### Dear Degrassi:

Two of my friends hate each other and they keep fighting over me. It seems like they're both afraid that they are going to lose me to the other. This year I will be going to high school and they have both asked me to hang around with them, but I don't know who to hang around with. What should I do? —**Two Friendly**

### Dear Two Friendly:

If you really like both of them and want to be friends with both, why should you have to choose? Talk to each friend separately and explain how you feel. Tell them that you want to stay friends with both of them but that you feel caught in the middle and need their support and understanding. If they're really your friends, they will stop fighting over you. Maybe you can work out a way to hang out with each of them at different times during the day.

High school is a big change from junior high, and keeping the friends you have can make it easier to make the switch. —**Heather**

### Dear Degrassi:

There is a teacher I like, but she is ten years older than me. Every time she

## Dear Degrassi:

I am a female and 17 years old. I had seen a few episodes of *Degrassi Junior High*, but I became a faithful viewer after the episode in which Spike became pregnant. I was astonished at first that television would present a girl in grade eight as becoming pregnant. Later, I felt it was an excellent idea to show the troubles with teen pregnancy that are faced by both the girl and guy involved. It presented the truth.

The actors represent real teens today. They aren't phony. They act like teens and deal with real teen problems. Most shows don't present these problems well.

I know the show deals with junior high students, but I feel the problems dealt with are ones which all teens are faced with. Whether you're in junior high or senior high, *Degrassi* is for you. I even know adults who watch.

I think *Degrassi Junior High* is an excellent effort and I hope to see much more of it in the future. Keep up the excellent work.

E. H.  
Nova Scotia, Canada

## Dear Degrassi:

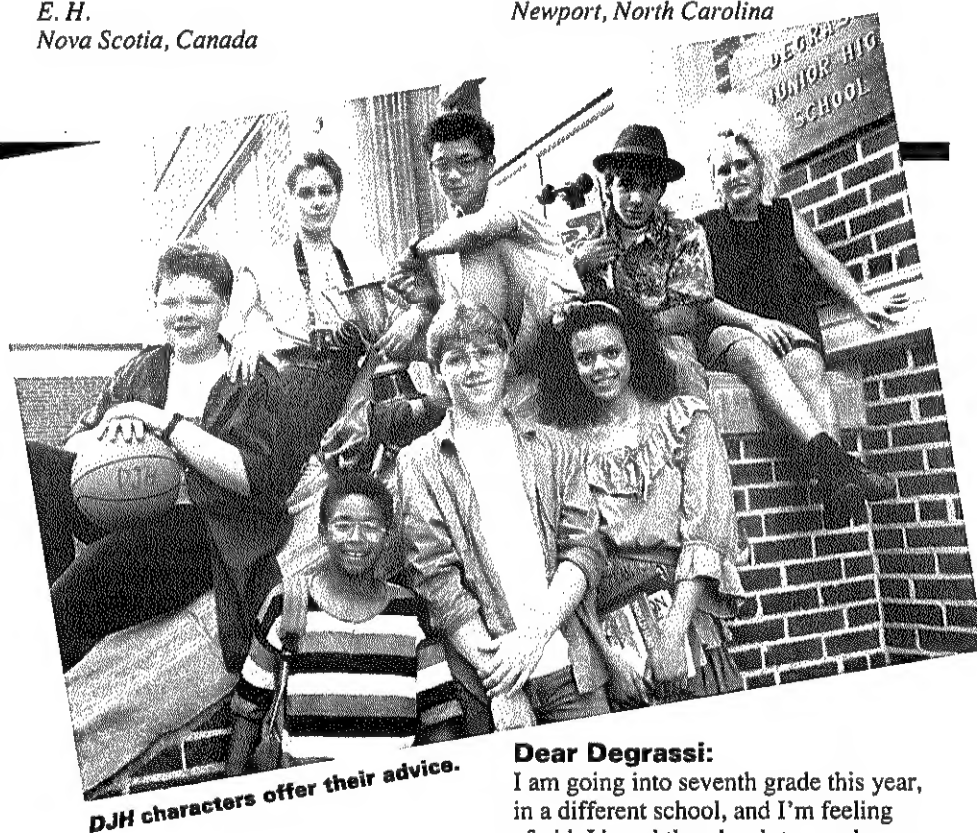
I am an eighth grade student and our class has been watching *Degrassi Junior High* for the whole year. I think it really shows true life, like here at our school.

*Degrassi* shows how real teenagers act and how they get in trouble without even realizing it, like when Lucy got Voula in trouble because of her shoplifting. Teenagers should stop before doing something bad and really think, "What will happen if I get caught?" Then there would be less teenage crime.

*Degrassi* has helped me with many of my problems. One of these was that one of my friends has a habit of shoplifting. After I saw your episode "What a Night," I told her I wasn't going to another store with her if she was going to shoplift. I wouldn't have had the nerve if I hadn't seen the series about Voula getting in trouble for what Lucy did.

I hope this encourages you to keep showing *Degrassi Junior High*, maybe even as the kids go on to high school.

T. H.  
Newport, North Carolina



DJH characters offer their advice.

enters the classroom, I get butterflies in my stomach. What can I do? Do you think she would ever go out with me?

—**Teacher's Pet (I wish)**

### Dear Teacher's Pet:

I once had a crush on a teacher too. I was so nervous around her that I couldn't speak without stuttering or walk without tripping whenever I saw her. I couldn't even concentrate in class! I called up a radio talk show for advice and found out that teachers aren't allowed to get involved with students and that I was really too young for her anyway. I was upset at first, but now I've started going out with girls my own age and it's really fun. Because we're in the same grade, we have the same interests and we like to go to the same places. And I don't feel so nervous around them either. —**Yick**

## Dear Degrassi:

I am going into seventh grade this year, in a different school, and I'm feeling afraid. I heard there's a lot more homework, and that the older kids push you around. What can I do? —**Nervous**

### Dear Nervous:

It is scary to go a new school — I'm nervous about going to high school next year. It helps if you already have some friends that will be at the new school with you. But it isn't as hard to make new friends as you might think. Look around for other kids who seems nervous and talk to them. Pretty soon you'll forget how nervous you were.

I met Yick the first day of seventh grade and we've been best friends ever since. After the first week of school it didn't seem so new anymore. We help each other with our homework and it doesn't seem like as much. So just take one day at a time and everything will work out okay. —**Arthur**

## Student activities

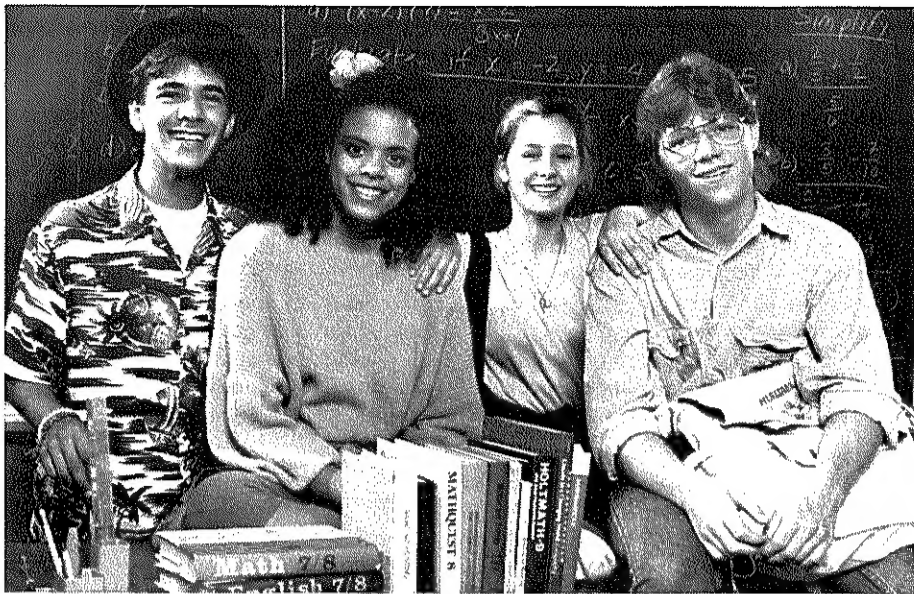
- Read the letters to the editor in your local newspaper. What issues are the people in your community concerned about? Do you agree with their opinions?
- Send a letter to the editor in response to an article in your local newspaper.

- Read the advice columns in your local paper (such as Ann Landers, Dear Abby, and Ask Beth). What problems are described in the letters? What advice would you give the letter writers?
- Write your own responses to the "Ask Degrassi" letters.

# Who's who in the cast

**A little bit about some of the actors with starring roles in *Degrassi Junior High***

By Kathryn Ellis



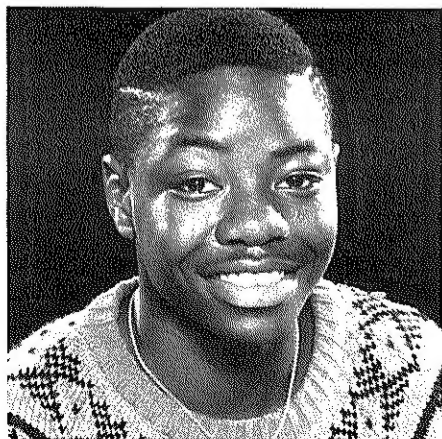
Joey, Lucy, Caitlin, and Wheels

## Joey (Pat Mastroianni)

Pat, 16, was the first person through the door when auditions were held for *Degrassi Junior High*, even though his friends told him he wouldn't make it. "Joey has some similarities to me, but he's also different. I'm not musically inclined, I don't get into fights, and I don't get into quite as much trouble as he does." Pat hopes to study radio and television arts after high school. "I'd like to be an actor, but I need to have other things I can do if acting doesn't work out."

## Lucy (Anais Granofsky)

Anais, 15, says her audition for *Degrassi* was a disaster, but she made it into the company anyway. "Lucy is a great character to play," says Anais. "She's a bit like me in some ways, not in others. She's very insecure, which I'm not, but she's interested in people, and we're similar there." Anais hopes to have a career as an actor, but adds, "there are so many other things that interest me too."



B. L. T.

## Caitlin (Stacie Mistysyn)

Stacie, 17, has been acting for television since she was 8. "Caitlin is like me in some ways — she lets people know when she feels strongly about something, yet sometimes she keeps to herself. She has two sides, like me." Stacie loves the opportunity as an actor to be different people. "I get to try on different personalities, in a way, and I enjoy that a lot."

## Wheels (Neil Hope)

Neil, 15, likes the character of Wheels. "Wheels is friendly, kind of quiet, and a good listener," says Neil, "but this year, with losing his parents, I'm getting a chance to develop him in some different directions." Neil hopes to continue acting, and would like to be a director someday.

## B. L. T. (Dayo Ade)

Dayo, 15, sees B. L. T. as being a lot like him, just a little younger and more innocent. "He's a fun kind of guy, doesn't go looking for trouble, and is a little shy around girls. He likes sports, and that's like me, too." Dayo plays on eight school teams, in addition to playing in a hockey league. Originally from Nigeria, Dayo would be a tribal prince if he still lived there. "But I prefer to feel just like everybody else." He has four career ambitions: "I'd like to be an actor, or a professional hockey, football, or basketball player."

## Michelle (Maureen McKay)

Maureen, 17, enjoys playing the role of Michelle. "She's a character that comes from inside me," says Maureen, "but we've taken different routes. She's terribly shy and sensitive, and I think I might have been like her if it hadn't been for *Degrassi*. But I think even Michelle is starting to open up a little." Maureen loves the atmosphere on set. "I love the

people, the professionalism, the spontaneity — there's always something new happening. When we had the new kids out for orientation at the beginning of this season, I realized how much I had learned since the beginning."



Michelle



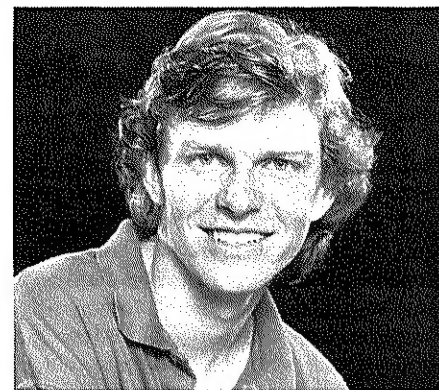
Simon

## Simon (Michael Carry)

Michael, 16, was modeling for catalogues when he was called to audition for *Degrassi*. The actor who had been cast as Simon had dropped out unexpectedly, and Michael auditioned on a Saturday evening. On Sunday morning, he was on set, performing on film for the first time in his life. "At first it was kind of scary — I had no experience, and I didn't know anyone — but now my best friends are here, and I really love being in the show." Michael hopes to continue acting, but he's also an avid downhill skier, "so I might like to be a ski instructor if acting doesn't work out."



Melanie



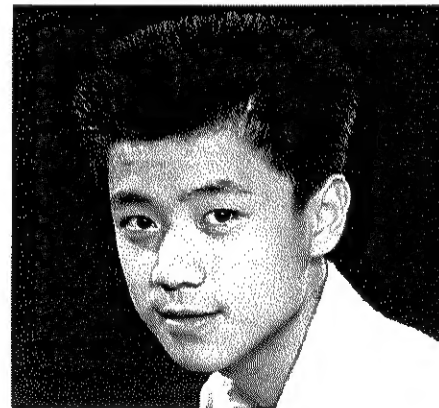
Snake

## Snake (Stefan Brogren)

Stefan, 16, was cast in what was originally a small role as a candidate opposing Stephanie in the Student Council elections. He sees Snake as someone who sometimes lacks self-confidence. "I think I'd be a lot more like Snake if it weren't for the show." He hopes to continue acting as an adult, and would like to try his hand at directing as well some day. "I don't know if I'll be a good one or a famous one, but it's what I really want to do."

## Yick (Siluck Saysanasy)

Siluck doesn't see himself as being much like Yick. "Yick's more immature, he's shy about girls, he's disorganized in school. I might be a bit lazy, but I'm not as bad as he is." Originally from Laos, Siluck is the youngest of eight children. A bonus of being on *Degrassi* is the opportunity to travel. "Going to Memphis was the best thing so far. We saw the Mississippi River and Elvis's house — which was really tacky — and met some really neat people." As far as the future goes, Siluck has "absolutely no idea what I'll do. But there's lots of time yet to decide."



Yick

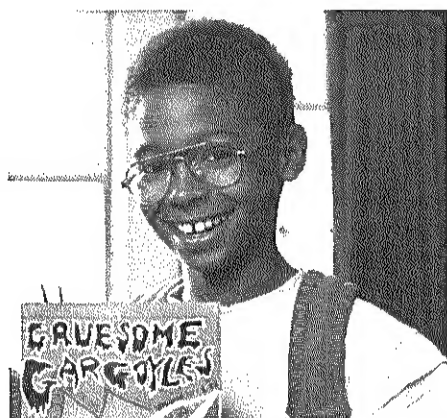
## Melanie (Sara Ballingall)

Sara, 15, does not see herself as being much like Melanie. "Melanie has basically one interest in life, and that's boys. I like to think I'm not as shallow as she is, but I admit, I can be forgetful at times." Sara is unsure of what she wants to do as a career. "I'm interested in writing and photography, but I can't see myself as an actor." Watching herself on TV is one of the worst parts for Sara. "It makes me too self-conscious of all the wrong things, like the way I hold my head or something. Eventually I do see all the episodes, but it's not my favorite part. Still, I can't imagine my life without *Degrassi*."



**Heather (Maureen Deiseach)**

Maureen, 16, came to audition with her sister after she was given an audition form by her teacher. With no twins, or even sisters, among the original characters, she didn't think they would both get into the company. "I figured it would be Angela they would choose. I would have been upset, but I would have been just as upset if I had been chosen and Angela hadn't." Maureen plays Heather, the more cautious twin, but she sees herself as more like Erica. "I wish I could have as much fun as Erica does, but I'm not sensible at all!" Maureen enjoys everything about working on the show. "It's fun getting recognized on the street, I love the people I work with, and it's a lot more fun than the jobs most teenagers have. It sounds strange, but I even like the odd hours." Having been on *Degrassi*, Maureen says, "I can't imagine not working somewhere in the film business."

**Scooter****Scooter (Christopher Charlesworth)**

Christopher, 12, likes playing the part of Scooter. "He's smart, and he doesn't tag along — well, sometimes. But he's very interesting and usually knows the answers when the teacher calls on him." Although Christopher probably won't pursue an acting career, he'd like to keep it up "until high school, or until my grade average drops below 79 percent." He adds, "It's great meeting new people, and it's something to do instead of sitting around watching TV on Saturday."

**Kathleen (Rebecca Haines)**

Rebecca, 15, was persuaded to go to the audition by her mother. "She literally threw me in the cab! After the audition, I thought I'd done so badly that I just put it out of my mind." She finds the role of Kathleen fun to play. "She's getting meaner, I think, but also more vulnerable." Besides working on *Degrassi*, Rebecca takes five ballet classes a week, teaches ballet, sings in her school choir, and keeps up her grades at school. "I guess I'm like Kathleen in always wanting to do well at things, but I hope I don't take it to the extremes that she does." Rebecca would like to make a career as an actor, but she's also considering following her father's footsteps into the technical side of film production. "Either way, I hope I end up somewhere in the arts."

**Erica and Heather****Erica (Angela Deiseach)**

Angela, 16, plays the older of the twins. In real life, she's older as well — by six minutes. "I like to lord it over Maureen on our birthday," she jokes. She sees her personality as being more like Heather's, but she enjoys playing Erica, because Erica has more fun. "They're both intelligent, in different ways. Heather is smarter in school, but Erica does better in a social situation." Angela feels her acting has really improved. "I love getting up in front of a camera and trying things. I'm learning so much about acting, and I'm hardly aware of it, until I look back at the earlier shows. I cringe when I see the things I did wrong. I really want to make a career as an actor, so I'm trying to learn as much as I can now."

**Alexa****Alexa (Irene Courakos)**

Irene, 17, feels that Alexa has a lot in common with her. "She's bubbly, she's not shy, but she's naive. I'm not as naive as Alexa is — at least I hope I'm not!" It was Irene's lack of shyness that got her into the show. "I saw them filming on my street, and I went up to the director, and said, 'Excuse me, sir, I'm an actor. Will you please take my resume, and if you ever need anybody, just give me a call. And when they were casting for *Degrassi Junior High* — they called!' Irene enjoys everything about working on the series and hopes to make a career as an actor. She describes the other cast members and crew as her second family. "If something comes up in my life, the first thing I think of is whether it will conflict with *Degrassi*."

**Kathleen****Arthur (Duncan Waugh)**

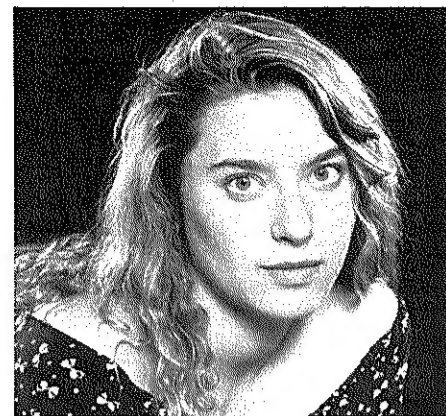
Duncan, 13, was surprised when he got the part of Arthur in the first season. He sees similarities between himself and Arthur; they both like comics and watching sports on TV, "but I think Arthur does better in school!" At one point, he considered leaving *Degrassi* to concentrate more on his schoolwork. "But it's so hard to give it up — even when we shoot a Christmas episode on the hottest days in August and they make us wear sweaters."

**Arthur****Spike (Amanda Stepto)**

Amanda, at 18, is *Degrassi's* oldest cast member. She has received a lot of mail asking whether she really wears her hair that way (yes), and whether she's really pregnant (no). "Half the people I meet seem to think I really am Spike because I look like her, and the other half think I'm some sort of glamorous star. I just feel like a regular person." A long-time dream of Amanda's was fulfilled when she went to England recently. "There were so many people with hair wilder than mine!"

**Liz (Cathy Keenan)**

Cathy, 16, feels the character she plays is a lot like her. "She's quiet, she keeps to herself, and she doesn't trust everyone she meets. I'm like that too. But I think she's starting to fit in more at *Degrassi* now." Cathy, who hopes to continue acting, really enjoys the experience of working on the show. "It's something a lot of other kids don't get the chance at. If nothing else, it's something to brag about when you get older!"

**Shane, Spike and Liz****L. D.****L. D. (Amanda Cook)**

Amanda, 16, did not expect to pass the audition, much less to win one of the original roles. "L. D. has changed a lot since the beginning," she comments. "Before, she used to just bum around, but now she's more aware of herself as a girl. She's dressing differently, and she cares about what she looks like." Amanda considers herself like L. D. in the way she speaks out for what she believes in, whether it's a feminist cause or keeping a friend from getting a bad reputation. Although Amanda loves working on the show, she has no plans for an acting career. "I enjoy it, but it's not me. I might like to get into advertising. It's still creative, but it's more a behind-the-scenes type of work."

**Shane (Bill Parrot)**

Bill, 17, identifies with his character, Shane, and his struggle to grow up. "I've never gotten a girl pregnant, but I think Shane's like me — like all teenagers, really — trying to figure out who he is inside, trying to get a little more freedom. The difference is that Shane seems so desperate, when he should realize that it takes time." Bill enjoys learning about the film industry, and when he goes to see a movie, he finds himself looking at technical aspects of the filmmaking and at the performances, "to see how I can improve my own acting. I even stay and watch all the credits now." Although he gets a kick out of seeing himself on TV, he doesn't see an acting career in his future. "I'm interested in maybe going into real estate."

# Measuring up

**An older brother or sister can be a tough act to follow**

By Laurie Werner

"No matter what I do, it's never as good as my older sister," says Janie, a 12-year-old from Long Island, New York. "Her grades are better, her room is cleaner. Basically, everything she does is wonderful — but I never do anything right."

Sound familiar? If it does, you're hardly alone. A lot of kids are finding out that it can be pretty tough to be a younger sister or brother. Older siblings seem to set standards that everyone — parents and teachers especially — expect you to live up to.

Nobody likes being compared to someone else. Why, then, do parents and teachers do it? It may seem as if they're just mean, but psychologists think it has more to do with feelings that they simply can't control. "Parents have emotional blind spots," explains Dr. Lawrence Balter, a child psychologist. "They often tend to be tougher on the children they see more of themselves in." That child, of course, could very well be you.

Other reasons for making comparisons include plain old human nature. "Parents just fall into comparing their children, because it's a natural impulse," explains Leah Lefstein, director of The Center for Early Adolescence. "It's the same thing as when kids compare their friends or experiences. We shouldn't do it, but we all do — and that includes teachers. They simply form an impression as soon as they hear the last name."

Having a superstar for an older brother or sister is obviously a tough act to follow, but following a sibling with a bad reputation has its pressures too. Initially, you may look terrific next to an older sister who's a troublemaker or an older brother who's a terrible student, but dangers can arise.

"I've seen younger siblings who defined themselves as the 'good one,' the one who got good grades and always listened to her parents, really suffer in the long run," says Dr. Balter. "To maintain that image, they often have to submerge their own true personalities and squelch their natural rebelliousness at times when it would have been healthy to rebel."

The bottom line in all of these cases is that you have to be yourself. Trying to be like an older sister or brother — or rebelling by trying to be very different from them — just doesn't work. It isn't easy, of course, to keep your self-image separate from an older sibling's, especially with parents and teachers constantly comparing you, but there are ways to do it.

For starters, keep one important fact in mind: Often, just by virtue of being older, siblings will be better at some things. As Lefstein explains, "They've simply had more time to develop better

skills." Those skills may be yours too — when you get to that age.

In other cases, the two of you may have distinctly different talents and qualities. For example, your brother may be a superbrain or a near-professional tennis player, and you may never acquire those skills, no matter how many years you wait. In that case, don't even bother to try — the pressure would simply be too much to take.

Instead, find an activity that you like and in which you can excel. "Okay, you may never be a brilliant student, but you might be a talented artist," says Lefstein. "Find something that you enjoy and of which you can be proud."

If you do, you'll be armed with extra self-confidence to help you take the next big step — confronting parents or teachers when they come at you with those dreaded comparisons. "By confronting, we don't mean slamming doors and screaming 'I hate you,' " says Dr. Sandra Scarr, a psychologist. "Instead, you have to stay cool and calm and really spell things out. Say 'I don't like it when you compare me to my brother/sister. It makes me feel terrible, it hurts when you do things like that. We're individuals and I don't think it's fair to compare us.' It's part of a parent's job to listen to you, and if you make sense and tell it to them clearly, they will listen."

The same approach should work with teachers as well. State clearly that you're a different person than your sibling and that you don't want to be judged as if you were your brother or sister. If you then demonstrate your own personality and try not to act like your sibling, the teacher should get the idea.

Of course, some parents and teachers may be hard to convince. In that case, according to Dr. Balter, you can involve a third party to intercede — a favorite aunt or uncle, or another teacher — as

## Student activities

- Look at relationships between siblings portrayed in the comics pages of your local newspaper. Look for instances where they fight, make fun of each other, or help each other out. How do these relationships compare to your relationship with your siblings?
- List the ways you are similar to your brother or sister, and the ways that you are different. Then make two more lists: one that describes the talents or skills a brother or sister has and one that describes your special talents or skills.



**DJH characters Rainbow and Liz (left) are sisters Anna and Cathy Keenan in real life. Duncan and Annabel Waugh (right), siblings in real life, play cousins Arthur and Dorothy.**

long as you trust that the person can be diplomatic. "Parents — and teachers, too — get very defensive," he explains. "They don't want to be told by someone else that they're doing a bad job. But what that outsider can do is remind them of something they've said and ask them how they think you felt when they said that. It might make them at least think of the results before they speak."

In the meantime, there are still a couple of points that might help you through. There are people in your town, Lefstein explains, who know you on your own — a teacher who didn't also have your sibling, a coach, a community worker — and talking to them might help to remind you that you are an individual and not just somebody's younger sibling. It's also important to remember that nobody's perfect, not even that dazzling brother or sister who may seem that way.

Also keep in mind that as you get older, some things do get easier. After 15, says Dr. Scarr, most kids begin to get a better sense of who they are, and the comparisons may not sting quite as much.

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## Embarrassing moment #1

By Delia Ephron

### On a date

Pick up a slice of pizza and take a bite. Watch the mozzarella cheese stretch. Bite down harder. It is still stretching. Move slice farther away from mouth. The strands are growing thinner and longer. You can see three spaghetti-like strands of mozzarella cheese extending out of your mouth. They are hanging between the slice and your mouth like jump ropes. You do not know what to do. With the hand that is not holding the pizza, grab cheese with fingers, break off, and stuff ends in mouth. Chew, swallow, do not look at date, and begin again.\*

\*From *Teenage Romance, or How to Die of Embarrassment*, by Delia Ephron. Text copyright ©1981 by Delia Ephron. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission of Viking Penguin, Inc.



**Angela (left) and Maureen Deiseach enjoy being twins.**

## Reflections on being a twin

By Patricia Crotty

Having a brother or sister has its ups and downs, but what's it like to be a twin? For Angela and Maureen Deiseach, who play Erica and Heather on *Degrassi Junior High*, being twins has its good and bad sides, too. It's great to always have someone there when you need them, but it can be harder to establish your own identity when someone else looks and acts a lot like you.



# Teens speak out

By Debbie Snider and Patricia Crotty  
Photographs by Daniel Sutherland

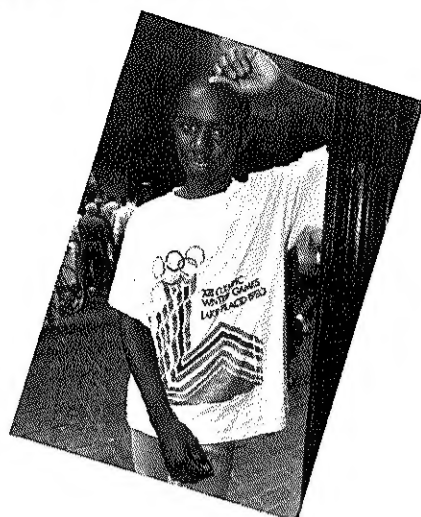
We asked some teenagers to talk about the best things and the hardest things about being a teen, and about the things that concern them. Here's what a few of them had to say.

## Carlita Rezende, 17

The best part about being a teenager is boys! Especially the cute ones! The hardest part about being a teenager is my parents. They want me to be like them — good all the time. Also, school is not so great because I can't stand my teachers.

I think kids have it harder today than our parents did. My mother is from the Cape Verde islands. Her father owned a store and they had it easy. I'm looking forward to marriage when I get older, and maybe one day being in charge of my own business.

I like being a teenager now. I don't know how I'll feel when I'm an adult, but I like this life now. I can do a lot of things now, and I don't have too many responsibilities.



## Bruce Sinclair, 16

The best part about being a teenager is getting to stay out late and being able to work and make your own money. I have my permit now, and I'm looking forward to getting my license and my own car. The hardest part about being a teenager is having to do chores and having to take orders from my parents.

I want to be a lawyer when I grow up. I'm not going to get into criminal law; I'll be a real estate or sports lawyer.

Kids today have more to worry about, like AIDS and war. I'm not so worried about nuclear war, but war in general. We should be able to settle everything by now, if people would just sit down and talk.

I like being my age. You don't have to work if you don't want to. These are the best years.

## Landon Debnam, 13

The best part about being a teenager is that you don't have to pay for anything. You don't have to work, all you have to do is go to school. The hardest part about being a teenager is making my ten o'clock curfew.

People should be more worried about nuclear war. If I was President I'd try to make friends with other countries and give a big speech about how we're all in this together and all the countries have to work together.

Teenagers have it better now than our parents did because they couldn't afford TVs and radios and all that. We have it made.

I want to be a doctor because I want to help people. I'm looking forward to having kids. I like kids. I'm an only child.



## Anna Gardiner, 16

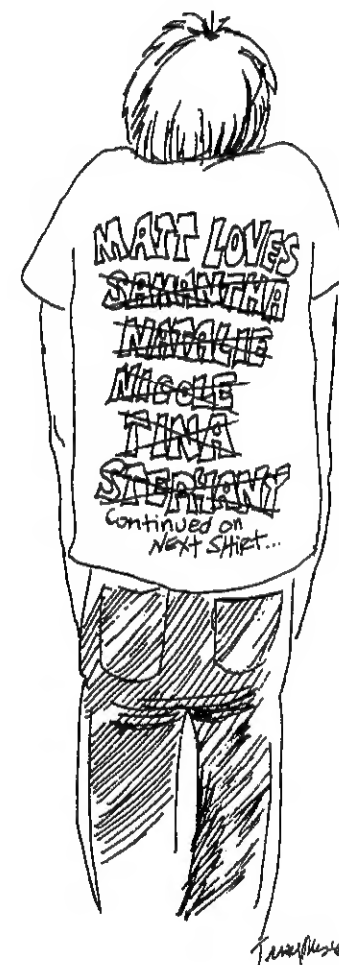
The best part about being a teenager is boys! The older you are, the less afraid you are. But you don't have to think about getting engaged and stuff. The hardest part about being a teenager is that you're not always allowed to do what you want. Your parents still have a grip on you.



## Lisa Bilodeau, 12

The best part about being a teenager is that you have more freedom than when you were a kid. My mother lets me do more things now than she used to, like staying up later. On weekends I can stay up as late as I want.

The hardest part about being a teenager is not knowing what to do, like how to handle peer pressure, what clothes to wear, and how to act.



Tracy Morse

## Student activity

- Conduct your own "Teens speak out" survey by asking students in the cafeteria or hallways how they feel about a controversial issue at your school. Some topics might be cutbacks in extra-curricular activities or changes in school policies. Write out the answers and publish them in your school newspaper or copy them for other students.

"On the surface we seem the same, we look the same, and we may do the same things, but we think about them differently," Angela explains. Although they have different personalities, the twins share a lot of the same traits. "We're both outgoing, but she's *more* outgoing, we're both talkative, but she's *more* talkative, and we're both intelligent, but I'm *more* intelligent," Angela jokes.

Because Angela and Maureen are so close, each often knows what the other is thinking. When Angela fell down once and cut her leg badly, Maureen knew something bad had happened to her sister, although she didn't know what it was.

But, Angela points out, their closeness can also cause problems. "Because we're the exact same age, we want the same things at the same time, and that can cause a lot of conflicts. We can't pave the way for each other — that's why it's better to have an older sister."

Since they sound so similar, the twins can have fun pretending to be each other on the phone or at school. Once, when they were shooting an episode of *Degrassi Junior High*, the cameraman had them switch places while the director wasn't looking. "We shot the scene, and the director didn't even notice until the end," Angela recalls. "But we had to tell him, because we were wearing different clothes and everything."

The twins were more competitive when they were younger, but as they get older and become more sure of themselves as individuals, they are less competitive. But, says Angela, "If we like the same guy and he picks one of us, it can be hard. If you and a friend like the same guy and he picks her, you can say, 'Oh, it's because she's prettier.' But if you look almost the same, you think, there must be something wrong with my personality."

One drawback to having a twin is that people tend to lump them together all the time. "I guess the only thing I resent about being a twin is having people think of us as one person," Maureen says. "So often we hear 'Twins on set!' 'Quiet, twins!' or 'Are the twins ready to go?' —

as if when one of us is ready, the other one must be."

Both Angela and Maureen agree that having a close, live-in friend makes up for the difficulties. "Basically, we understand each other better than we would anyone else," Angela says. "We are each a part of each other, both physically and emotionally, and no matter where we go, or what we go through, I don't think our understanding of each other will ever change."

"I feel my sister is a part of me, more so than anyone else I know," Maureen adds. "I love her and I have to say that if I wasn't Angela's twin, I wouldn't want to be one at all."

# Growing up with an alcoholic

By J. B. St. Onge

If you've found yourself wondering how many drinks your father will have before he goes to bed or whether your mother will be passed out on the couch when you get home, chances are good that you are one of the estimated 6.6 million teenagers in the country who are children of alcoholics.

I was. My mother's drinking made her unpredictable and impossible to reason with when I was a teen. She embarrassed me in front of my friends with her loud voice and ridiculous jokes.

As an adult, I'm still upset that my mother drinks. But because I finally sought help, I have unloaded feelings of anger and guilt that were threatening to harm me as much as drinking was harming my mother.

## Making excuses

In the "Bottled Up" episode of *Degrassi Junior High*, Kathleen must deal with the embarrassment and unpredictability that children of alcoholics often face. Her mother comes downstairs, drunk, while Kathleen and her teammates are preparing for their part in an upcoming television quiz show. The next day, she is too drunk to show up for the taping of the show. Although Kathleen makes excuses

to her teammates, you can see her loneliness when everyone else's parents applaud their children.

Kathleen does what many teenagers do. She tries to deny that her mother has a drinking problem and is reluctant to seek help. I can understand why. I never went for help when I was a teenager because I thought my mother needed the help, not me.

In some ways, I even used my mother's drinking to my advantage. I remember once when she wouldn't let me go to a party on a school night, and I went anyway. When I came home to face my father, I explained that mom was drunk and he sympathized with me.

But deep down I felt guilty when I did this, and I grew up carrying all kinds of crazy feelings inside of me. When I got a little older I started to feel it was my job to make my mother stop drinking. I had no idea how much these feelings were harming me until I finally did seek help, when I was 23 years old.

## A disease, not a flaw

I went to Al-Anon, a support group for adults who have to deal with a parent, spouse, or friend who is an alcoholic. Al-Anon changed the way I felt about

## Vodka in the closet

Once I accepted the idea that I couldn't make my mother stop drinking, I no longer had to confront her about her drinking every chance I got. I didn't have to sneak around the house to dig out her bottles and feel that ache in my stomach when I found a half gallon of vodka in her closet.

I didn't have to scream at my mother anymore and try to shock her by calling her a drunk. And I didn't have to suffer from the horrible things she screamed back at me.

At Al-Anon, I learned that when I battled with my mother this way, I was actually making matters worse. I may have succeeded in making my mother feel guilty, but then she needed a drink to escape the guilt.

When I finally stopped trying to force my mother to stop drinking, I learned to redirect that energy toward myself, and the bruises all over me finally started to heal.

From attending meetings with others who lived with alcoholics, I realized that I was not alone, that others had similar problems and that I could stop feeling sorry for myself. I also learned that there are very few perfect families. My family has had to deal with alcoholism, but others have had to deal with physical abuse, divorce, mental illness, financial stresses, and so on.

Even the parents who don't seem to have any obvious problems aren't always perfect. I learned that a friend of mine whose mother I admired was compulsively cheap. My friend grew up resent-

# Whose baby is it?

By Leslie Anderson

When Michael was 16 and a freshman in high school, his 12-year-old girlfriend became pregnant.

Michael had messed up before. He was a poor student and a troublemaker in school, the kind of kid the dean called "very defiant, very immature." There were reports that he smoked marijuana. He was thrown off the football team for fighting.

When Michael found out about the pregnancy, he wanted to keep the baby. His girlfriend, Jamie, thought it would be better for the baby if she put it up for adoption.

But Michael wouldn't give his consent to make the adoption final. He was doing better in school, taking a class in child development, and planned to go to college. He thought he could be a good father. His mother said she would help him.

What should happen? Does Michael, the father, have the right to raise his own child? Or should Jamie, the mother, have the final say? What is best for the baby?

This could be the plot of a television drama — in fact, it is similar to the situation Spike and Shane have been grappling with in *Degrassi Junior High*. But this dilemma is real, and in 1985 it was put before a group of judges on the California Supreme Court to decide.

After studying all the testimony — from family, psychologists, and school officials — two of the judges concluded that Michael and his mother could provide a warm, loving home for the child. But the other five judges said the evidence clearly showed that Michael lacked the maturity needed to care for a baby.

## Life with baby

Karen had figured out her schedule perfectly.

When school ended for the day, she would take her baby daughter out of daycare, drop her off at her mother's house, and head to basketball practice. Afterward, her boyfriend would get out of work and watch the baby until she got home.

Yep, she decided, she'd be able to stay with the team.

But when she showed her schedule to her boyfriend, the father of her child, he brought her down to earth.

"It would have been too much shuffling around, and it wouldn't have been fair to the baby," she realized. "By the time I would get home, she would have been going to bed. I decided that it just wasn't going to work."

## Student activities

- Look for liquor advertisements in your newspaper. What kind of impression do they give you about alcohol and drinking?
- Invite a representative from Al-Anon, Alateen, Alcoholics Anonymous, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), or Students Against Driving Drunk (SADD) to talk to your class about alcohol.

## Getting help

There are many places to find help if a parent, close relative, or friend has a drinking problem. Your school guidance counselor, health teacher, or nurse can direct you to social services provided in your community.

Call information and ask for Al-Anon or Alateen to find a meeting near you. For other information on where to get help, call the National Council On Alcoholism at 1-800-NCA-CALL. You can also look for help in the telephone directory Yellow Pages under Alcoholism.



Kathleen has a hard time dealing with her mother's alcoholism.

myself and my family, and most important, the way I felt about my mother.

In Al-Anon and in Alateen (a support group for teenagers), you learn that alcoholism is not a character defect, but a disease — just like diabetes or cancer. You learn that your parent cannot control his or her drinking by sheer willpower, any more than diabetics can control their insulin level. Once you realize that, you can learn to love your alcoholic parent again — and that is the single biggest step in helping you recover from growing up with an alcoholic.

When you really believe that drinking is a disease, you also realize that you could not possibly have caused or even contributed to your parent's drinking problem, and that you have no control over making them stop.

ing that she could never have people over for meals. My mother was often drunk, but she was also warmhearted. Our house was open to everyone, and I was usually even allowed to bring a friend when we went on vacation.

Through Al-Anon, I realized that for years all I saw in my mother was her alcoholism. I thought her drinking was selfish, but now I realize that despite her alcoholism, she was a generous and devoted mother who deserved my respect.

And learning to respect my mother went a long way in learning to respect myself.

J. B. St. Onge is a freelance writer and a reporter for *The Providence Journal* in Rhode Island.





**Shane and Spike grapple with the responsibilities of parenthood by pretending an egg is the infant they may soon have to care for.**

The majority ruled. To this day, the child — now five years old — remains with his adoptive parents.

### Rights of unwed mothers

Emotions run high when a teenager gets pregnant. Often, boyfriends, girlfriends, and their parents disagree bitterly over what should happen to the baby.

But beyond the emotions are laws that govern decisions about abortion, custody, and child support. These laws spell out the rights of pregnant teens and unwed parents, as well as the responsibilities that must be shouldered once a child is born.

For example, if a teenager decides that she wants an abortion, legally there is nothing the father of the child can do to prevent it. But in twenty-five states, the law requires that girls under 18 who want

abortions must either notify their parents or get their permission. Otherwise, they must go before a judge who decides whether they are mature enough to make the decision on their own. However, because of court challenges to these laws, only ten states are actually enforcing them.

If a teenage girl decides to give birth to her baby, as some five hundred thousand do each year, no one can force her to give it up. But if she keeps the baby, she has the responsibility to give it proper care. If she abuses or neglects the child, she can lose custody.

The father of the child has legal responsibilities, too; whether or not he is still involved with the mother, he must provide financial support until the child reaches adulthood.

"If you have a teen father who is in school full-time, we're not going to say

he should be working from eight to two, making minimum wage," says Johanna Moran of the Massachusetts Department of Revenue. "We feel it's better for him, and in the long run in the interest of the child, to stay in school." But, she adds, "Even if all you can hope for is a token payment, that means something. It's saying to the father, You are a teenager, you are in school, but you have a child, you have a responsibility. Your child cannot wait three years to eat."

Other states have their own policies for collecting money from teen fathers, but all insist that fathers start paying once they turn 18.

Before an unwed father has any legal rights or responsibilities to the baby, however, he must be legally declared the father. In most states, paternity is established in court, and blood tests are often used to settle the issue.

### Rights of unwed fathers

Much has been said about forcing teen fathers to live up to their responsibilities. But what about boys, like Michael, who are shut out of their children's lives?

Traditionally, unwed mothers have had the upper hand in deciding the child's future. Adoption agencies usually made little or no effort to contact the fathers for their permission.

"It's always been in the girl's favor, because she's been able to go have the baby and say she didn't know the father," says Judy Battle, a lawyer and social worker from Connecticut.

In recent years, the Supreme Court has strengthened the rights of unwed fathers in custody and adoption disputes. But to win a judge's favor, Battle advises, an unwed father must show that he has provided financial and emotional support for the child. "Without that, your chances are pretty much nil in deciding the course of the child's life."

And in the end, all decisions must come down to what is best for the child.

Leslie Anderson is a freelance writer who lives in Massachusetts.

### Student activities

- Cut out ads for child care in the newspaper and calculate how much it would cost to hire someone to care for a child during a typical work or school week. Add up the total cost per year and compare it to the salaries listed in employment ads in the classified section.
- Look in the court listing section of your local newspaper to see if there are any custody battles currently going on. Conduct a mock trial in your classroom in which a "father" and "mother" both want custody of the child. After each side offers its arguments, discuss as a class who should be allowed to have custody of the child, then take a vote.

Karen had given up a lot since her baby was born during her junior year of high school. She dropped out of the school orchestra. She stopped practicing the piano. While her friends got their drivers' licenses and exulted in their new-found freedom, Karen stayed home nights with a demanding infant.

But giving up basketball was the hardest blow.

"If I hadn't stopped, I really would have done a lot," she says wistfully. When she watched the other girls practice, she noticed how they would "slack off" when they got tired.

"I would think, You're so stupid. Don't you know you should be enjoying this? Because it's not till it's taken away that you really notice how much you miss it."

In many ways, Karen's story is one of success. With the help of a special school

program for teen mothers and strong emotional support from her mother, Karen was able to graduate from high school with honors.

She is now in college. Welfare pays for her child care and living expenses, and her boyfriend contributes child support. When she graduates, she hopes to move out of her parents' house, get married, and get off welfare. She is determined to provide a good life for her daughter.

"She's the best thing that's ever happened in my life. I have no regrets that I had her," she says. "I just wish . . . it would have been easier if it had been a few years down the road."

For Karen, life with a baby has been difficult, but for Yolanda, who had her baby at 17, it has been even harder. When she arrived at a restaurant to talk about her experience, one of her eyes

was black and swollen. A few days earlier, she says, she yelled at her boyfriend for not helping her out more, and "he really beat me up."

"I guess 'cause of all the pressure with the baby," she explains. "I yell at him and everybody yells."

When Yolanda became pregnant, her mother urged her to go to an abortion clinic. "I just couldn't go through with it," Yolanda says. "My boyfriend didn't want me to get an abortion either. He said everything would be okay. His mother would babysit, and I'd be able to finish school."

But after the baby was born, it was a different story. "Things started changing. My boyfriend didn't have a job. And I had to take care of her. Every time I asked him to babysit, he'd try to run out of the house and leave me there."

Now on welfare, Yolanda has barely enough money to pay for food and clothing for her baby. She says her boyfriend has been ordered by the state to pay child support, but he hasn't paid.

With her mother and her boyfriend's mother providing babysitting, Yolanda was able to graduate from high school this spring. She wants to go to college or enter a computer training program, but has to find child care first.

Yolanda's advice to other teenage girls who are thinking of having a baby is to "think twice." She adds, "Make sure that the boy's telling the truth that he's going to take responsibility, that he's going to help out and everything, that he's not joking. Because it's no joke. It's a life. It's a child."



# Testing the limits of friendship

By Claudia Logan

Even the best of friends don't always get along. The characters in *Degrassi Junior High* have had their share of problems too. Below are some situations from various *DJH* shows that are typical of the conflicts friends often face. How would you handle these situations if they involved you and your friends?

**From *Loves Me, Loves Me Not***  
Alexa tries to help her friend Michelle attract the attention of B. L. T., but her efforts backfire when she gets involved with him instead. Alexa tells Michelle, "Boys are like buses—if you miss one, another will come along in a few minutes." Michelle isn't the only one hurt by what Alexa has done; Alexa has insulted her boyfriend, Simon, as well. Alexa gets a taste of her own medicine at the school dance when she sees Michelle and Simon walk in together.

- Should Alexa have ignored her attraction to B. L. T., knowing that Michelle liked him? What should two friends do when they like the same guy? Should Alexa's friendship with Michelle have come before a possible romance?
- Were Michelle and Simon playing fair by showing up at the dance together? How might everyone involved have resolved the situation differently?

**From *The Experiment***  
Yick asks Arthur to lend him an old paper that his sister Stephanie wrote, to prove that he's being graded unfairly. In exchange, he'll help Arthur with his basketball game. When Yick gets his best grade yet on the assignment, he asks Arthur to keep supplying him with Stephanie's old papers.

Arthur feels trapped; he doesn't want to do something that he thinks is wrong, but he doesn't want to lose Yick as a friend. According to Yick, friends do things for each other, even if it involves a little cheating.

- Was it fair of Yick to involve Arthur in his scheme? How could Arthur have avoided cheating for Yick but still remain friends?
- Once Yick helped Arthur with his basketball game, did that entitle him to a return favor? Does being best friends mean you should do anything for the other person?

**From *A Big Girl Now***  
Lucy has begun to spend more time with her new boyfriend, Paul, and less time with her good friends, L. D., Heather, and Erica. She frequently breaks dates

with them to see Paul. Lucy's friends finally get fed up when they discover that Lucy's latest excuse for breaking a date is a lie. Soon after, Lucy realizes that her romance with Paul may not work out. When she tries to make amends with her old friends, it looks as though it may be too late.

- How could Lucy have balanced her time better with her friends and Paul? Should friends be understanding when someone cancels plans with them to pursue a new and exciting romance?
- Lucy realized the importance of friendship after things didn't work out with Paul. Did this make her apology less sincere? What could she have done to get back on good terms with her friends?

**From *Can't Live With 'Em***  
No one is quite sure what to say to Wheels after his parents are killed. Snake feels terribly sorry for his friend but can't seem to find the right words to let him know. Meanwhile, Joey calls Wheels constantly even though Wheels won't speak to him. Wheels feels let down by Snake's obvious discomfort, but he can't handle Joey's nonstop phone calls either. He needs his friends' support, but no one seems to be able to help him through the crisis.

- Why did Snake feel so uncomfortable around Wheels? What should Snake have said to him? Was Joey right to keep phoning Wheels even though his calls were not wanted?

- What are some ways of showing support for a friend who has just been hit with a tragedy?

**From *A Big Girl Now***  
Kathleen is running for school president, and Melanie is hurt when Kathleen refuses her help as a campaign manager. Kathleen wants to do everything herself, until she realizes that she might not win and she needs Melanie's support. After Kathleen's second-place finish, she becomes vice president, and Melanie asks Kathleen to put her on the dance committee. Instead, Kathleen advocates a ninth-grade-only policy for the committee, to exclude "immature" eighth graders like Melanie.

- Was Kathleen wrong to refuse Melanie's help at the beginning of her campaign? How could she have avoided hurting Melanie's feelings, but still run her campaign independently?
- Was it right for Melanie to ask Kathleen to use her influence on her



behalf? Was Kathleen's proposal a betrayal of her friendship with Melanie?

**From *Loves Me, Loves Me Not***  
Caitlin has a crush on Joey, who is repeating the eighth grade. After Joey gets another disappointing grade from Mr. Raditch, his friends suggest that he ask Caitlin, who obviously likes him, to help him out with his school work.

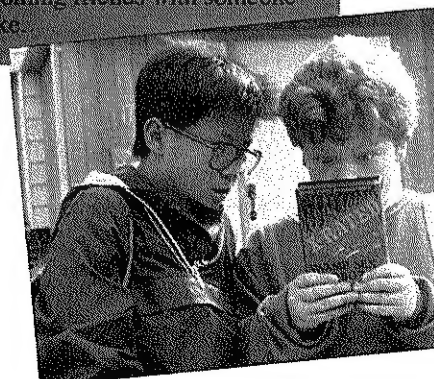
Caitlin is thrilled when Joey asks her to team up with him on an assignment. Joey is ecstatic when they receive an A for their work, and he tells Caitlin that he'll dance with her at the school dance. But at the dance he ignores Caitlin and spends the entire time with his date, Liz. The next day, when Joey approaches Caitlin for some math help, he can't understand why she turns away.

- Should Joey have been more honest with Caitlin when he asked her to work with him on the assignment? Is it fair to befriend someone just because they can help you?
- Do you think the friendship between Joey and Caitlin can survive such a bad start?

Claudia Logan teaches children's literature at the Park School in Brookline, Massachusetts.

## Student activities

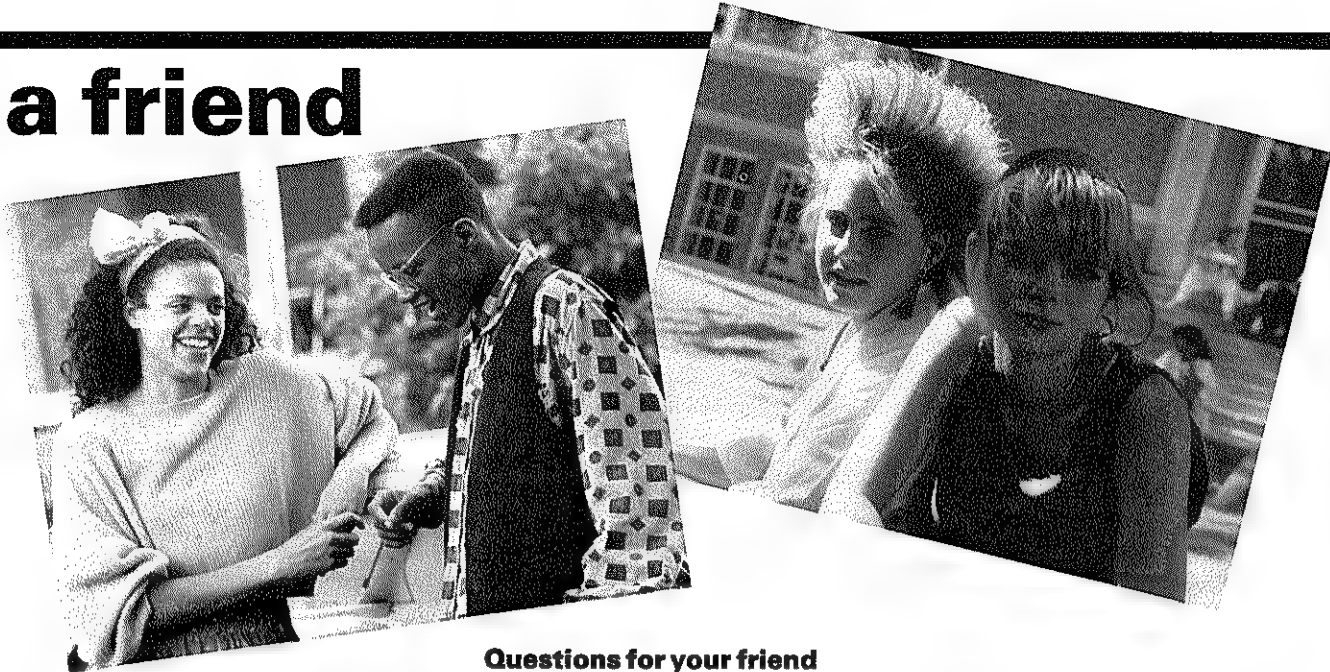
- Look in your local newspaper for examples of friendship—in articles, letters, advice columns, or even on the comics page. What kind of relationship do the friends have? When problems arose, how did they deal with them? What would you have done in the same situation?
- Make a list of some of the difficulties you may have faced when you tried to make a new friend. Then list some of the things that have helped you start a new friendship. Try to think of ways to overcome problems that get in the way of becoming friends with someone you like.





# How good a friend are you?

How well do you and your best friend really know each other? Are you as close as you think? The questionnaires below may help you learn more about each other and your friendship. Fill them out separately, then compare your answers. Use your answers as a way to talk about how you can improve your friendship.



## Questions for you

1. List five adjectives that describe your best friend.  
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\_\_\_\_\_
2. List five adjectives that describe you.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What do you like best about your best friend?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What bothers you the most about your best friend?  
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\_\_\_\_\_
5. What is the nicest thing your best friend has done for you?  
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\_\_\_\_\_
6. What is the nicest thing you've done for your best friend?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Is there something your best friend has done or said that hurt you, and if so, did you tell your friend how you felt?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. When something is bothering you, do you tell your best friend about it?  
Does your friend confide in you?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. How good are you at keeping your friend's secrets?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Can you trust your friend to keep your secrets?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
11. If your friend was wearing something that looked awful, would you say anything?  
What would you want your friend to do in the reverse situation?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
12. If your best friend did something that you disapproved of, what would you do?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Questions for your friend

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# Throwing a great party

By Claudia Logan

It's incredibly fun to go to a great party, and incredibly nerve-wracking to give one.

When Fran, an eighth grader, decided to have a party, she impulsively invited all her friends to come that night. When people started to arrive, Fran was still busy getting the food ready, and the stereo she borrowed hadn't shown up yet. Fran's party wasn't a total disaster, but there wasn't enough food or dancing music, and the party dragged in spots. Fran had a hectic, anxious day of planning, and barely enjoyed her own party.

Parties are a great way to get your friends together, but they require some planning and thought. Here are some suggestions to help you out.

## Dealing with your parents

Talk to your parents ahead of time to come up with a reasonable compromise between their presence and your privacy. Decide on the number of friends you'll invite, the space you can use, how much money you can spend (and who pays for what), the time, and all other ground rules and arrangements.

"Having your parents there is kind of hard, but necessary," advises Jessica, a seventh grader. "But it's embarrassing when your parents start taking pictures of you dancing — or worse yet, start dancing themselves!"

Your parents can help prevent situations from getting out of control. As the host, you will have your hands full without coping with unexpected emergencies. "When one of my friends got sick, my mother took over," points out Liza, also in seventh grade. Problems with crashers, alcohol, drugs, or fights are less likely if parents are around.

## Picking the date

Give yourself plenty of time for sending out invitations, planning the party, and buying everything you need. You might choose a time when there aren't a lot of things going on, or tie your party into a larger event like a holiday, the last day of school, or graduation. Avoid conflicts such as having your party on the same day as a school dance or another party.

## Setting up the room

Space is an important consideration. "Don't squish everyone," recommends ninth grader Allene. An indoor-outdoor setup is ideal so that people can move around. If that's not possible, be realistic about numbers and pick a room that seems suitable. Decorations like balloons and crepe paper really make a room festive. Also, get colorful paper plates, cups, and napkins.

Don't forget to roll up the rugs and remove breakable objects. It's also a good idea to close the doors of rooms that are off-limits.

## Getting people to dance

Since dancing is usually the main activity of every party, make it a high priority in your planning. "Good music is key," says Matt, a veteran party giver and goer. Borrow a good stereo and ask your friends to bring their favorite tapes and records. Make the lighting dim (but not dark!). It's great to try to arrange for one person to act as D.J.

While dancing usually takes center stage, parties always have one or two lulls. Having a few back-up ideas can help revive a party that's slowing down. "I think it's fun to have little contests or a funny game," says seventh grader Sara. "You can award little prizes."

## Making your party a success

Get some friends to come over on the "big day" to help you set up the room, decorate, put out food, arrange music, and give you moral support before the first doorbell rings. Having a few friends come early also helps prevent the awkwardness with first arrivals.

Be sure to circulate among your friends and introduce people to each other if they haven't met. Try to get a sense of the pace of your party, so that you can pick the best time to introduce a new activity.

## Other ideas

Not every party has to be big, especially if space is limited. Having a few close friends over to celebrate something specific like a birthday, or just to get together, can be great fun. You can also center a party around an outside activity like softball or skating. Going to a special movie or event and having everyone over afterwards can also be a fun way to entertain.

## Embarrassing moment #2 #4

### At your boyfriend's house for dinner

**Salad:** With fork, pick up a piece of lettuce and look at it. Will it fit in your mouth? Put it back on the plate. Attempt to cut with fork. Wonder if it's okay to use a knife on salad. Look around the table to see if anyone else is using his knife. No one is. Pick up the lettuce again. Put it down. Pick it up. Put it down. Pick it up, open mouth, close eyes, and cram it in. Open eyes and realize that your boyfriend's mother is looking at you strangely. You are eating her salad.

**Roll:** Remembering what your mother told you about the correct way to eat rolls, break off a small piece, scattering crumbs on the table. Butter, place in mouth. While chewing, answer a question, spraying a shower of crumbs across the table.

(Alternative: Mistake roll for baked potato — cut slit in top and stuff butter in.)\*

## Fruit punch recipe

**Note:** The night before the party, make large ice blocks by freezing water in plastic bowls. When you're ready to serve the punch, run the bowls under warm water to remove the ice. Also, refrigerate all of the ingredients except the sugar.

### Ingredients

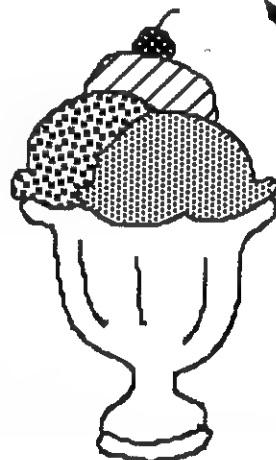
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 1/4 cups lemon juice
- 2 cups apricot nectar
- 1 six oz. can of frozen orange juice, defrosted
- 3 cups apple juice
- 2 cups pineapple juice
- 2 quarts ginger ale
- 1 orange
- 2 limes

1. Boil the sugar with 2 cups of water for one minute. Cool. Pour into a large bowl. Add all the other juices.

2. Cut the oranges and limes in half, lengthwise (from navel to navel). Then cut the halves crosswise into 1/4" slices. Add to the bowl.

3. Just before serving, add the ice and ginger ale.

Claudia Logan teaches children's literature at the Park School in Brookline, Massachusetts.



## Party tips

- For original invitations, consider Xeroxing a funny drawing or cartoon onto colored paper, printed with your own message. Any copying place will do this for about ten cents apiece.

- Themes can liven up a party. Using a popular era, such as the twenties or fifties, is fun. Even a "sunglasses" party or a "black-and-white" theme works well. Costumes, decorations, and food are easier to plan, too, when there's a theme.

- Scout out toy stores for inexpensive but unusual prizes or favors. Gift certificates from real places, or ones you make up, may also be popular.

- Host a party around a particular food that needs to be prepared. Pizza, Chinese food, or giant make-your-own sundaes may be really fun, particularly with a smaller group. Then you can eat the results of your labor.

- Keep the menu simple. Choose foods that people can serve themselves, and don't serve more than one thing that needs personal attention.

- If you have ice cream or something that needs to be eaten immediately, get everyone together before serving.

- Have tons of refreshments. People get very thirsty during parties and often drink more than they eat.



# Stepping over the thin line

By Orna Feldman

"Oooohhhh, I'm so fat. I can't stand it. I have to go on a diet."

The battle of the bulge. Who hasn't gone on a diet at least once? Trying to shed those extra pounds often becomes a constant struggle with one kind of diet or another.

But for some, the battle becomes a deadly crusade that develops into a severe eating disorder. People who suffer from these disorders eat compulsively and feel out of control around food. The most common eating disorders are bulimia, the bingeing and purging syndrome; anorexia nervosa, or self-imposed starvation; and compulsive overeating.

Doctors who treat eating disorders often point to society's infatuation with thinness as at least one cause of the syndromes. "The social pressure over weight and shape is relatively new," says Perry Belfer, an eating-disorders specialist. "Bulimia was rarely seen before the 1960s, when Twiggy and the miniskirt were big. Now it's reaching epidemic proportions."

Of every one hundred young women, up to five will be bulimic during their lives, according to Belfer, while about one will suffer from anorexia. Bulimia usually hits girls in their late teens or college years. Anorexia develops earlier, usually in the early teens. Both disorders affect women much more than men. For every one hundred bulimics, five to ten are men; for every one hundred anorexics, only one is male.

Health professionals who work with compulsive overeaters say it is their obsessive attitude toward food that defines the disorder.

In their battle against these disorders, doctors use a variety of treatments, including medications and family therapy, with varying degrees of success. "About seventy percent of the people who have been treated for anorexia do reasonably well," estimates Dr. David B. Herzog, director of a major hospital's eating disorders unit. For bulimics, he adds, "the rate of recovery is slower and the rate of relapse is higher. But most bulimics tend to improve over time."

Below are profiles of three young people who have struggled with food since they were teenagers. Their names have been changed at their request.

## Bulimia

When Terry was 14, she went on a crash diet and ate almost nothing for two weeks. When her mother forced her to sit down at the dinner table and eat, Terry felt ill afterwards and vomited naturally. For the next few years, whenever she ate, she felt "full and bloated," and forced herself to throw up. "I wasn't aware that

what I was doing was wrong until I was 16, when my mother confronted me and dragged me to a doctor," Terry remembers. "I denied it to the hilt."

Terry, an attractive 22-year-old, suffers from an eating disorder known as bulimia. Bulimics binge on food, eating as many as 5,000 calories in a few hours, then purging themselves by vomiting, taking laxatives, or exercising excessively. Terry's approach to food was threatening her health; constant bingeing and purging can rip the esophagus or stomach, enlarge the liver, and cause severe tooth decay and other side effects. "It's slow suicide," Terry says.



Kathleen has the classic symptoms of anorexia in the show "Food for Thought."

For Terry, vomiting after eating became a routine, often as frequently as sixteen to twenty times a day. When she first started making herself throw up, she would stick her finger, a toothbrush, or a spoon down her throat. But she soon became a pro. "I could throw up just by leaning," she said. "And I could do it anywhere — in restaurants, in friends' homes. I got so good, no one ever knew."

Terry's eating habits were also a big secret. A typical lunch could be three cheeseburgers, Chicken McNuggets, fries, ice cream, and a Coke. Then there would always be an ice cream cone at three o'clock. At five, she might down a full dinner of chicken, potatoes, and peas, then go home to her parent's or boyfriend's house at seven, pretend she hadn't eaten yet, and have dinner again. This happened every day.

At 135 pounds, Terry is neither fat nor thin. Why did she start on this path of bingeing and purging? "I hated reality. I hated my family," she says. "It was supposed to be the 'perfect family.' But really, everyone hated everyone else. They were all playing a game. Like my mother — she pretends to be a happy,

devoted mother, but she's angry all the time, slamming things and sulking."

Terry thought that if she didn't eat, she could control her life. "Bulimia was my way of saying to the world, 'I'm gonna show you I can be perfect.'"

Feelings of being perfect alternated with feelings of being a total loss. "It was either: 'I'm going to be rich; I'm terrific,' or 'I'm a complete waste; life's a waste; I'll never get anywhere,'" she says.

Terry struggled with these extremes of feeling, all the while eating compulsively then throwing up. She tried therapists, but felt they didn't understand her. She was even hospitalized briefly in an eating disorders program. Nothing helped.

Finally, after living this way for eight years, Terry began attending meetings of Overeaters Anonymous (OA), a support group for people with eating problems, modeled after Alcoholics Anonymous. That was several months ago, and for over a month now she has eaten regular meals and hasn't binged or purged. For

"He gave me a weight that I would be hospitalized at," Julia recalls. "And I was thinking, 'If I lose two pounds a week . . . I knew I needed help, but I was fighting it.'" A few weeks later, she was hospitalized for a month.

But the problem didn't go away. A year and a half later she was hospitalized again and had to have a feeding tube inserted into her nose. She later went on a program of self-starvation and developed bizarre eating habits throughout her high school and college years. The cabbage diet was one example, another was a popcorn-only diet. "I'd never have normal meals," Julia says. "I'd skip them."

Along with these eating habits came bizarre and ritualistic exercising. Every day in high school, Julia would swim for three hours without stopping. "I was afraid not to do it. I remember I told myself I couldn't eat anything until I'd done a certain stroke for a certain amount of time." When her mother grounded her from going to the country club pool, she would sneak into other pools. "I had a weird energy that wasn't real," she recalls. "I was so weak, but I could've plowed over a truck to go swimming."

Like other anorexics, Julia is obsessed with physical exercise and keeping in shape. Thinness is something she would die for, literally. Anorexics lose about a quarter of their body weight. They also stop getting their periods, suffer from constipation, and often lose hair on their head while getting a downy covering of hair on their arms. And no matter how thin their bodies really are, they always feel fat. Their body image just doesn't square with reality.

Julia points to her mother's demand for control and perfection as reasons she became anorexic. "My mother told me what I could and couldn't do all my life," she says. "She controlled everything. I couldn't buy a dress by myself. She wouldn't let me wash my hair before football games. I was being a rebel by washing my own hair! I could never predict when she was going to get angry. I felt completely out of control of my life. And there was no way to please her."

Doctors say Julia's perceptions are common among anorexics. Most anorexics are model children, according to Belfer. "They do everything right. They're very compliant to teachers and parents. But when adolescence hits, they're not prepared to cope with the pressures of independence. One way to control their lives is to control what goes in their mouths."

Although Julia has controlled what goes into her mouth, she has not been able to control what her eating habits have done to her body. Because she has deprived herself for so long, her body can no longer handle foods like wheat flour, milk, cheese, or sugar. "If I eat a piece of bread, I get stomach aches and diarrhea," she says.

Six months ago, soon after she reached her lowest weight ever, Julia realized that she is "powerless over food. I can't eat rationally." So now she eats

Terry, bulimia was a way to deny feelings. But, she says, "people need to deal with feelings, share them." At OA, Terry feels she has found people she can relate to, and this makes her recovery easier. "I know I'm licking it," Terry says. "I don't know if it's over, but I know I've made a beginning."

## Anorexia nervosa

There are some weeks that Julia eats only cabbage: cabbage soup, cabbage salad, cabbage casserole. Julia is a tall, blonde 22-year-old from an upper-middle-class family. She is also stick-thin, and suffers from anorexia nervosa.

Julia started playing "mind games" with her food when she was about 16. She had lost some weight, and when people told her how good she looked, "It was a challenge to myself to lose more," she remembers.

And so she did. Within several months she was down to 85 pounds, dangerously thin for her 5'9" frame. Her mother took her to the doctor, who put her in the hospital for tests that same day.

continued on page 14

continued from page 13

exactly what a dietician tells her to, four times a day. Also, she is not obsessing about food quite as much as she used to. The best thing, she said, would be "to be able to worry about other problems."

Recovery is a slow process, and in the meantime Julia goes regularly to OA meetings, which are helping her learn to "trust something out there besides food," she says. "The good news is that I'm doing things to take care of myself, for the first time in years."

## Compulsive overeating

Trisha has become a shadow of her former self. A compulsive overeater, she tilted the scale at 265 pounds and was up to a size 24 two years ago. Now she weighs a modest 135 — half her former body weight — and has cut her dress size to an 8 or 10.

Trisha is an auburn-haired 24-year-old who works as a personnel assistant at an art museum. She remembers being the "fattest kid in grammar school." By the time she was 12, when she weighed 165 and was a size 16, weight had become a constant struggle. WeightWatchers and diet camps were regular features of her high school life. She always lost weight, but she always put it back on. "And they were humiliating experiences," she adds.

Both of Trisha's parents and her brother were also compulsive overeaters. Her father weighed 400 pounds; her mother, 200. "It was hard to get my own food, since people were always charging for it," she remembers. "You had to be creative."

One way of being creative was hiding it. "If I was in the kitchen and someone was in the living room, I'd try to get the food out of the kitchen and into my bedroom without anyone seeing." And when she cleared the dishes from the table, she wanted everyone out of the kitchen, "so I could eat the leftover macaroni by myself."

If certain foods were in the house, Trisha had to eat them. "If there was ice cream in the freezer, it would have to be finished before I went to bed. If I thought of potato chips, I *had* to have them. I'd go out and get some and then eat all of them, even if I didn't want to." After she got her driver's license, she kept stashes of food — bags of potato chips and dip — secreted away in her room.

Food became more and more of an obsession. "If I got it in my mind, I couldn't *not* eat it," Trisha says. She developed bizarre habits, such as eating a whole bottle of Cremora — the powdered nondairy creamer — all at once, or eating three butter sandwiches in a few minutes. And she started lying about what she ate.

Trisha felt tortured by her obsession with food, and it just got worse. Her social life was on hold all during high school. "I went to dances and asked boys to dance, and I got turned down a lot," she says.

In college, she had crushes on a few guys, but that's as far as it ever went. She remembers one dance where she saw a guy she liked a lot. "He was looking around and I was praying and screaming inside, Ask me! Ask me! Ask me! But he looked right past me, like I was invisible. I was huge — but invisible," she says. Trisha went back to her dorm room and cried uncontrollably; then she went to the store for something to eat.

One night at college, she and a few of her friends were having a late-night heart-to-heart rap session, talking about all sorts of intimate things. For the first time, she admitted she had a problem with food and couldn't stop eating. The next day she called the health clinic, but didn't leave her name and never called back. "I felt totally helpless. I knew I didn't want to eat but I couldn't do anything about it. I hated my body. I had trouble breathing. I couldn't go shopping. I was totally envious of my friends. But food felt worth it. Food was the fun part of my life. I thought if I gave up food, my life would *really* get boring."

A few years later, through discussions with a co-worker who was an alcoholic, Trisha realized she had the same kind of addiction to food as her friend did to alcohol. She began going to Overeaters Anonymous meetings, and started controlling the amount of food she ate.

"I don't know how I got through the first days," Trisha says. "All I could think of was the next meal." That was two years and 100 pounds ago. She still obsesses about food but, she stresses, "I don't eat it."

Other parts of her life have changed, too. Her self-image has gotten a big boost. "I thought I'd be obese all my life; I accepted that. I accepted a life less than what I deserved — for cookies!" She also started dating for the first time, and now has a steady boyfriend. Her life is "beyond any fantasy I ever had as a fat person," she says. "I'm in love with a golden person. I wear beautiful clothes. I can shop. I can sunbathe. I have hope."

Orna Feldman writes for both television and magazines.

### Resources

If you have a problem with bulimia, anorexia nervosa, or compulsive overeating, your family doctor can help you. The following organizations can also help.

National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders  
Box 7  
Highland Park, IL 60035  
(312) 831-3438

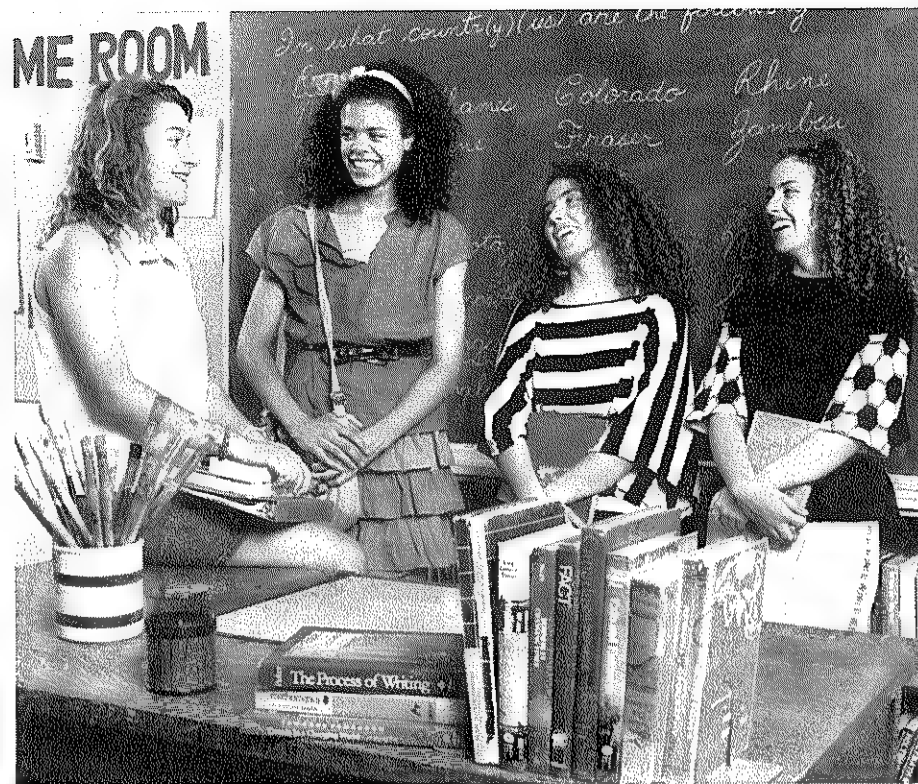
Bulimia, Anorexia Self-Help  
6125 Clayton Avenue, Suite 215  
St. Louis, MO 63139  
(314) 991-2274

Overeaters Anonymous  
World Service Office  
4025 Spencer Street, Suite 203  
Torrance, CA 90503  
(213) 542-8363

# Get happy

## Forget the money and go for the guts

By Diana Shaw



Good friends make even the bad times better. Pictured are DJH pals L. D., Lucy, Erica, and Heather.

Chances are, you're pretty sure you know what would make you happy: A million dollars, a perfect body, and another million dollars — for starters, right?

But if that's what comes to mind when you *really* think about happiness, you may have a problem. For one thing, having such expectations can make you feel pretty miserable about what you actually have. Worse, because those things are so hard to come by, you may feel hopeless about the future whenever wealth, good looks, and fame seem out of reach.

So, what does it take to be happy? Here is a list that has nothing to do with money, looks, or popularity, and everything to do with making yourself at home in the world.

### 1. A new definition of happiness

Every time you turn on the TV, someone's telling you that you can't be happy if you've got dental plaque, dull floors, or limp, dry hair. Your parents may be telling you that you won't be happy without a good education, a decent job, and a family of your own. Your friends may be convinced that happiness is issued along with a driver's license.

Forget all that. Other people can share their ideas about what makes them happy, but that doesn't mean you'll be happy with the same things, any more than you can be convinced to like broccoli just because it's your best friend's favorite food. When you think of happiness as a feeling of having a reason to get up each day, a feeling of belonging in the world, you'll realize that you have many more opportunities for finding

happiness than if you stick to someone else's ideas about money, fame, and good looks.

### 2. Guts

Go for adventure: Be willing to try classes, jobs, and activities of all kinds, including some you might not think you can handle. If you're a shy person, that means putting yourself in situations where you'll have to deal with other people. If you're easily distracted, it means challenging yourself to take on something that demands concentration. Stretching yourself to meet such challenges will make the world seem less threatening, and the friendships, skills, and wisdom you pick up along the way will give you the confidence and enthusiasm you need to want to leap out of bed every morning.

### 3. A high opinion of yourself

You should like yourself enough to believe that you deserve to go after whatever you want in life. Further, you have to like yourself enough to take care of your body and mind, to understand that looking your best comes from feeling your best, not from trying to be or look like anyone else.

### 4. Curiosity

Not long ago, people were pronounced dead when their hearts stopped beating. But now you're considered dead when your brain gives out, even if your heart is going strong. In other words, life depends on an active mind. The more you ask and learn about the world, the more alive and at home you'll feel in it.



## 5. Passions

Passions give you a stake at being alive, things to look forward to, as well as the motivation to make it through tough times and put up with difficult people.

## 6. Idols

It helps to have people, living or dead, who inspire you with their ideas, attitudes, and accomplishments. You can find them by reading biographies of people who did things that appeal to you, by looking for newspaper stories about people who've done something you admire, or by getting to know a teacher, employer, or the parent of a friend who can give you guidance, motivation, and enthusiasm for your future.

## 7. Kindness

There's a popular belief that you have to be nasty, rude, and a bit of a cutthroat to get what you want in life. But you're bound to find that it's easier to live without whatever you gain that way than to live with knowing how you got it. Besides, kindness will attract people (see 10).

## 8. Impatience

As soon as you know what you want, go after it. Don't wait around for a "better time" or for anyone to hand it to you. Take responsibility for reaching your

goals. Don't wait for opportunities to advance yourself. Make opportunities. (For this you need 2, 3, and 4, above.)

## 9. Patience

Take time to develop the skills you need to get what you want. Once you achieve your first big goal, you'll find that the process of reaching goals — not actually getting them — is most of what there is to life. In other words, it's more important to enjoy the process of becoming what you want to be, than to expect happiness to come once you've accomplished whatever you've set out to do.

## 10. People

When you feel that happiness is being at home in the world, you know why you can't make it alone. When you're isolated and lonely, you start to wonder what you're doing in life. Companionship and sharing make you feel needed. The people who want to be with you, and who encourage you to be what you want to be, make you feel that you belong. Relationships, more than anything else, give you a place, and that place is where you'll find happiness.

Diana Shaw is the author of *Make the Most of a Good Thing: You!* and two Carter Colborn mysteries, *Lessons in Fear* and *Gone Hollywood*.

## Student activities

- Look at advertisements in your local newspaper and in magazines. How do they convey the idea that you would be happier if you bought the advertised items?

- Look in your local newspaper for profiles of people — actors, politicians, community leaders, business people, and so on. Do they seem happy about the choices they have made in their lives? How many of the characteristics described in the "Get happy" article do you think they have?

- If your state has a lottery, look for a newspaper article about someone who had a winning ticket. How much money was in the jackpot, and does the winner have any plans for how to spend it? What would you do if you had won that much money?

## Embarrassing moment #3 2

### Between classes

On your way to your classroom on the third floor, detour down to the first floor to pass the room where he has his next class. Is he there? He is! Smile and say, "Hi." He says hi back. Ask if he did the English assignment. Ask if he's ready for the test. Say that you'll see him later. Smile and say, "Bye." He is so cute!

Continue down the hall, swinging your hips in a way that seems sexy. Then, as you start up the stairs to the second floor, start running. Just make it to class on time. Flop down in seat, drop books on floor, take mirror out of purse, and look at yourself. There's a piece of apple between your two front teeth.\*

# Sneakermania

By Jane Regan

Sneakers have been around forever, but today's sneakers aren't just sneakers. They're fashion statements. They're status symbols. And they're high tech.

Sneakers are also big business. Last year, Americans bought 350 million pairs of sneakers, paying a total of \$7 billion. Only a small portion were bought for sports. The rest were bought for work, for school, and for nothing in particular. Americans, especially teenagers, wear sneakers a lot.

### Stepping in style

To create a design teenagers will like, shoe companies talk to shoe stores and coaches. They consult with the editors of such fashion magazines as *Seventeen*. And they pay groups of teenagers to sit around and talk about sneakers while designers sit behind one-way mirrors.

When Converse heard that California teens were decorating white canvas All-Stars, they quickly came out with predecorated shoes called The Splash Series. Teenagers also inspired other new sneaker styles, including a surfing and skateboarding series of All-Stars from Converse and "thematic art shoes" from Reebok — leather and nylon high-tops with modern art designs on the sides.

The newest style is the mid-top, which barely skims the anklebone. And according to Sally Booth from Adidas, "The colors are getting more subdued and

show up in details rather than taking over the whole shoe." She predicts that black will be the most popular color in the months ahead.

### Fit for sports

Since the early 1960s, when athletic-shoe development began to mean big money and heavy competition, sneakers have become more and more specialized.

Most of us don't need a complete sneaker wardrobe, but serious athletes need shoes that can support and cushion their feet while taking a beating.

For example, basketball and tennis sneakers should support the foot and ankle as it pivots and darts forward, backward, and sideways. For short sprints up and down the court, sudden jumps, and hard landings, companies have developed stabilizer bars, special lacing systems, and wrap-around jackets. Extra cushioning is placed under the ball of the foot.

Runners, however, need shoes with more cushioning and support under the heel, which hits the ground first in a running stride. Runners usually travel in a straight line, so the ankle doesn't need a lot of support. But since the average foot hits the ground about five hundred times when you run a mile, a good running shoe should be able to absorb shock equal to at least twice the runner's weight.



If you jog more than two or three miles a day, you should get good running shoes, but if you just go for a jog now and then, you don't need to pay \$70 for sneakers. You can use aerobics shoes (which absorb the shock of running as well as support the foot and ankle as it moves in many different directions) or a pair of all-purpose "cross trainers" that many companies are putting on the market.

Although you may need specialized shoes for certain sports — for example, cleats for soccer — for tennis, squash, volleyball, and the like, you can probably use a single pair.

### The next step

Athletic-shoe companies are always striving for the perfect sneaker. The next big stride may be shoes with "energy return," which absorbs shock then rebounds to push the foot forward.

Another possibility is sneakers that are injected with foam when you buy them, so they will fit your feet perfectly.

But no matter what shoe companies come up with next, one thing is certain. Sneakers — plain or fancy — are here to stay.

Jane Regan works for public television and likes to wear sneakers.

## Embarrassing moment #4 3

### At her front door

Should you ask her or just do it? Should you ask her or just do it? Should you ask her? Just do it. Move forward to kiss her and step on her foot.\*

# Letting go

## Learning to go on after someone you love has died

By Jody Feinberg



Wheels's grandmother comforts him after his parents are killed in a car accident.

In anger, you may have said to someone, "I wish you were dead," or "Get out of my life." But have you ever thought about what you would do if those words came true? This is what Wheels must face when his parents die in the *DJH* episode "Can't Live With 'Em."

## How to help a friend

It can be hard to be the friend of someone who has lost someone he or she loved. The friend you once joked and hung around with now may be sad and may seem to be a different person at times. Your friend may even avoid you because of the trauma. Whatever that person does, don't take it personally; it is just a way of coping.

You can help by letting your friend know you are there to lean on. That is what Joey conveys to Wheels. Even though Wheels lashes out at him physically and emotionally, Joey says to him, "Anytime you want to beat me up, that's what I'm here for."

It takes courage and strength to act as Joey did. Even if you are someone's good friend, it is normal to feel tongue-tied, awkward, and nervous with someone who is grieving. You worry that you will make the person feel worse by saying the wrong thing, or by saying nothing. You worry that your friend will cry

Fortunately, only about six percent of children lose one or both of their parents before they turn 18. But if someone you love were to die, what can you expect?

### Accepting death

In the months, and even years, following the death of someone you love, you are likely to feel a tangle of emotions that include shock, sadness, fear, loneliness, anger, and guilt.

When someone dies, whether by accident or illness, you may not believe it at first. You may even expect the person to reappear and tell you that everything is really all right. Wheels reacts that way when he dreams his parents are still alive.

But inevitably you have to accept that the person really isn't coming back. This is easier to do if you know the details of how the death occurred and if you go to the funeral. While you may actually feel worse when attending the funeral and other rituals, you will be taking a step that in the long run will make you feel better.

### Anger and guilt

As you try to make sense of the death, two of the strongest feelings may be anger and guilt. You may be angry that something cruel and unfair happened,

uncontrollably, and you won't know what to do.

If your friend does cry, you can say something like, "I guess it must be awful," or you can admit that you don't know what to say, but that you'll listen to whatever your friend wants to talk about. It isn't necessary for you to talk about the death, other than to acknowledge it in some way. Snake feels so awkward that he ignores Wheels and ends up hurting him. Snake could have helped his friend by expressing his sympathy and then inviting Wheels to join him in something, such as eating lunch, playing music, or walking home together. If Wheels declined, he at least would know that Snake was there if he needed him.

Even if you are just a classmate or casual friend, it is important not to ignore what has happened or to make a big deal out of it. Above all, the person needs to feel that friends and classmates are treating him or her normally, not like some freak to be pitied and stared at. School may be the one place where the person can get deeply involved and forget the pain for a while.

and you may look for someone or something to blame — just as Wheels initially blames Joey for pressuring him into disobeying his parents on the night they died. You may blame the person who died for abandoning you, and you may be angry about things he or she did while alive.

The need to protect yourself from pain is so great that initially you may not feel any grief. Like Wheels, your first response might be: What's going to happen to me? I don't want it all to change. Such feelings are natural, and there's no reason to feel guilty about them.

Although it is healthy to grieve, you may feel depressed, scared, irritable, and even physically ill. You may withdraw from others and have little interest in school or hobbies. But letting yourself be sad will eventually help you to feel better. If you bury your sadness, it could express itself in long-lasting anger, depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, and difficulty with adult relationships. However, it may take a while before you are able to express your feelings, and you should not try to rush it.

It can make a big difference to have someone to talk to about the person who died, how you feel, and anything else you may want to talk about. That person can be a relative, teacher, clergyman, or friend who will listen to you, accept your feelings, and comfort you.

### Easing the pain

Commemorating someone who has died can also help ease the pain by reminding you that the person lives on in memories you carry, the things you do, and the way they influenced you. Even doing something as simple as placing flowers on the grave can make you feel better. You can also commemorate someone through writing or artwork, or by talking with others about the person, doing an activity you shared together, attending a service, saying prayers, or doing something special on their birthday or on the anniversary of their death.

People often find that up to two years pass before they begin to get through a day feeling reasonably good after someone very close to them dies. And for years, there may be periods of intense sadness. But such feelings don't mean you have lost ground, and the pain will diminish over time.

A death can have positive effects, too. It may teach you to value life even more or make you more sensitive to the needs of others. You may even feel more confident about your ability to face other problems in your life.

Jody Feinberg is a reporter for *The Patriot Ledger* in Quincy, Massachusetts.

### Resources

Krementz, Jill, *How It Feels When A Parent Dies*. New York: Alfred Knopf, 1983.

LeShan, Eda, *Learning How To Say Goodbye*. New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., 1976.

## Paying your last respects

Every religious group follows a series of customs after someone dies, customs that are intended to honor the dead and help the living. As the close friend of someone whose parent has died, you may want to participate in these rituals but not know how. Certain actions — such as sending flowers or visiting someone's home — are part of some observances, but not others. Another adult or a funeral home employee can tell you what is appropriate.

What may be more difficult is knowing how to behave during the ceremonies preceding and following the funeral, such as during the wake and visiting times. Do you look at the body? How long do you stay? Who should you talk to? Should you be serious? By observing the manner of the people at the gathering, you can sense the mood that is appropriate. Once you have greeted your friend, you can stay just a short while. What matters is that you showed you cared enough to attend. It's all right to ask someone if you are unsure of what you should do. Many adults are uncertain too. Below are some ways you can participate, depending on the religious background of the deceased:

### Catholic

- attend the wake at the funeral home
- send flowers
- make a small donation to the church for a mass in honor of the deceased
- send a sympathy note
- attend the mass on the one-month anniversary of the death

### Protestant

- attend the visiting hours at the funeral home
- send flowers
- make a small donation to charity
- send a sympathy card

### Jewish

- make a charitable donation
- write a sympathy note
- visit the family during *shiva*, the seven-day mourning period following the burial
- make something for the family and mourners to eat during *shiva*

Rofes, Eric, *The Kids' Book About Death And Dying*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1985.

The Good Grief Program, Judge Baker Guidance Center, 295 Longwood Ave., Boston, MA, 02115.



# Likely suspect

## A short Carter Colborn mystery

By Diana Shaw

I knew something was wrong when Neil was late with the video.

Neil Weinstein is never late. He's what adults call "responsible," and what I'd ordinarily call "geeky," if he weren't one of my best friends.

My other best friend, Merry Jordan, was dying to see this Tom Cruise movie, but her mom said no way. So we'd asked Neil to pick up a copy and bring it to my house right after school, before my mother could get home and see us watching it and mention it to Mrs. Jordan.

When Neil didn't show, Merry shrugged, "Maybe it's a sign that I'm not supposed to see it." She's superstitious.

I'm realistic. "Maybe it's a sign that Neil got stuck doing something for his mom," I said. Mrs. Weinstein's major pastime was making up chores for Neil and his kid brother, David. And unlike David, who'd rather be grounded than do what he's told, Neil never had the nerve to say no.

The phone rang.

"I can't come," Neil groaned. "I lost my homework. The report that was due to Keating today. I went to hand it in, and it was gone! It took me a week to write."

"Where did you lose it?" I asked.

"If I knew that, Carter," he cracked, "it wouldn't be lost."

"You know what I mean! Do you think maybe you dropped it on the way to school or something?"

"I have no idea. All I know is that Keating's taking a grade off for every day it's late."

"But why? It was an honest accident!"

"Yeah, but Keating doesn't believe me. He thinks I never wrote it." Mr. Keating was new this year. He hadn't been teaching at Thomas A. Dooley High (TAD) long enough to know that Neil, a baseball nut, would pass up box seats at the World Series to get his homework in on time. "If I don't get it in fast," he added, "I won't have a chance to pull my grade up before report cards come out next week."

"It might be good for you to get something besides As," I joked. "Bad grades build character." I was about to hang up, when I heard a crash over the line, then Mrs. Weinstein's well-known shriek. "What was that?"

"Oh, my God!" Neil exclaimed.

"Mom asked David to put out the garbage — so he tied up the trash bag and threw it through the window."

"That's one way to get the job done," I cracked. "What's his problem?"

"His friends are going to hear Def Leppard, and she wants him to stay home and study."

Maybe throwing the trash out the window wasn't an appropriate response, but I knew how David felt. Mrs. Weinstein was always on his case to be more like Neil, the same way my mom was always after me to be like my brother,

Justin, who, unfortunately for me, is perfect.

I got off the phone and told Merry why Neil wouldn't be coming. "I guess we'll have to do it tomorrow instead," I added.

"Forget it," she replied, gathering her things to go. "It's a sign."

I shook my head. "It's suspicious."

"Why?"

"Neil losing his homework would be like . . ." I searched for a meaningful comparison. "Like Tom Cruise losing his looks."

"Maybe." Clearly, she had her doubts. "But accidents happen, Carter."

Two days later, Neil's homework vanished again. "Keating's going to kill me," Neil said, emptying his backpack for the millionth time, looking for the chapter summary due next period. "How could I lose it twice? In one week?"

"I don't think it's lost," I asserted. "I think it's stolen." Neil gave me a puzzled look, so I went on. "You know that you put it in your backpack last night, right?"

"Right."

"And now it's gone, right?"

"Right."

"Where has it been between then and now?"

"Gym. First period," he said.

"Did you lock it up?" I asked.

"No. I've been running late to gym, from the newspaper." Neil and I both work on the school paper, *TAD Times*. He's the cartoonist, and spends a half hour in the newspaper office drawing before school starts. "But I throw my backpack onto the bleachers where I can keep an eye on it."

"You can't be watching it every second, though," I observed.

"True . . ."

"So someone may have taken your paper while you weren't looking."

"But what would they do with it?" he asked. "They can't turn it in — it's in my handwriting!"

Good point. But I had a better one.

"Study hall," I said.

"Huh?"

"Whoever took your paper could copy it over during study hall." This gave me an idea. "Make a list of all the guys in your gym class who have Keating last period with you, I said. "I'll handle the rest."

Neil met me with the list after school. "Now what?" he asked.

"We look for motive and opportunity," I replied, studying the list. "Since they're in your gym class, each of these guys has the opportunity to steal your homework. And since Keating's class is last period, each of them also has the opportunity to copy it over during the day. So now it's a matter of figuring out which one has a motive to steal it."

Two possible motives came to mind. The first was practical: Since Neil is a

straight-A student, the culprit may have copied the paper to get a good grade. The second motive was mean: Maybe someone stole Neil's work so Neil's grade would drop.

Michael D. was first on the list. He was a pretty good student and a very nice guy. What motive could he have? None. "It can't be him," I said.

"No way," Neil agreed.

"What about Donny?" I asked, moving to the next name. He was a likely suspect, when you consider that Donny wasn't exactly Honor Society material.

"But he's never gotten a good grade in his life," Neil pointed out. "Why would he start going out of his way to get one now?"

"I'll investigate," I assured him.

"Now," I said, moving on to the next two names on the list. "What about Tar and Nick?" Tar Reid and Nick Darienzo were good enough students, so it wouldn't be Neil's grades they'd be after. They'd been giving Neil a hard time since elementary school — snatching his glasses and generally getting on his case for not being a he-man, which is how they thought of themselves.

"Maybe," Neil shrugged.

"But I don't think so." I'd changed my mind.

"Why not?"

"They pick on you to make themselves look good; they want everyone to know that they're pushing you around. Whoever's stealing your work wants to remain anonymous."

"I guess that leaves Donny," Neil concluded. "I can tell you where to find him," he went on. "Balboa nabbed him for detention. Defacing the walls again."

Not that I liked the look of four-letter words scrawled around the school, but I had to feel sorry for Donny. Other people could write on the walls or lockers all year long and never get caught. But whenever Mrs. Balboa, the principal, wanted to make an example of somebody, Donny was the one who was kept after to scrub. "He's in the corridor by the labs. Just follow the ammonia aroma."

As I approached, Donny was stooped over the bucket, wringing out the sponge. He didn't look happy, until he looked up and saw me. He didn't want to let on that the work was getting to him. "Yo!" he called. "What's happening, Colborn?"

"I'm working on a piece for the paper," I replied, casually. "It's about detention."

"Ask the expert," he muttered.

"That's the idea," I lied. "How many detentions have you had?" I was hoping to find out if his trouble in school was getting more serious, serious enough to make stealing Neil's homework seem like a good way to get out of it.

"How many days in a school year?" he cracked. "How many classes in a day? Add them up, and you get my detentions."

"Doesn't it bother you?" I asked.

He gave the sponge another squeeze and shook the hair out of his eyes. "Nah." He turned to scrub the wall. "But it bothers my parents."

"They on your case?"

"Yeah. Not about the detentions so

much. They're pissed about my grades. They're talking about sending me to Stanton."

The military academy.

"Man," he continued, "I'd rather die."

Or, I thought, steal Neil's homework to pull up your grades. I sympathized a little with Donny; my mother threatens to send me to boarding school every time my grades drop. But I couldn't sympathize much. After all, Neil was the victim here, and he was my friend.

I thanked Donny for his help, and headed home. By the time I got there, I knew what to do.

I sat down and dashed off an "assignment" that nobody would ever hand in: I strung together the headlines from the afternoon newspaper, without punctuation or paragraph breaks. Then I hopped on my bike and sped off to Neil's.

"What's this?" he asked when I gave him the pages.

"Your homework," I snickered. "I did it for you."

He skimmed over it and screwed up his face. "No wonder you got grounded for your grades."

"It's a fake," I told him. "Give me your real assignment, and I'll hand it back to you just before Keating's class. Meanwhile, we'll put this one in your backpack, and Donny'll be wearing a uniform and a buzz cut in no time."

"Huh?"

"Donny's parents are going to send him to Stanton unless he gets his grades up," I explained. "I think you've been helping him stay a civilian."

"Good theory, Carter," Neil agreed. "but I'm not letting you have my homework. No offense, but I'm not about to let go of it until I turn it over to Mr. Keating."

"What'll you do with it during gym?"

"I'm going to stop by Keating's room and give it to him before school," he explained, adding, "You look disappointed."

"I am," I admitted. "You'll get your assignment in, but we won't wrap up the case."

"Better safe than sorry, Carter."

"What about the future?" I insisted.

"You can't stop by Keating's every morning. What if you're late for school and can't make it? And what if Donny starts doing it to someone else?"

Neil shrugged. "I'm sure you can come up with another way to trap him."

Putting his own paper into his backpack, Neil walked me to the door, past the kitchen where his mother was chewing out his brother again. "Plug your ears," Neil warned.

"Why can't you be like your brother?" Mrs. Weinstein was shouting. "He does everything without having to be told! But I have to keep after you and keep after you . . ."

"How can you expect me to be like him?" David shouted back. "He's just a geek."

"Just because he works hard?" she shrieked.

"He's a geek!" David screamed again, stomping past us and out the door.

Neil sighed and put his backpack

continued on page 20

# Pounding the pavement

## How to find a job that's right for you

By Sarah Guille Kvilhaug

Whether you want to save up money for college, help your family out with the bills, or just have cash in hand for the things you want, how do you go about getting that all-important first job? It takes a little luck, planning, and work on your part. What follows are some basic questions and facts that will help you sort out the steps you'll need to take before taking your first paycheck to the bank.

### Finding the ideal job

First of all, figure out why you want to work — that will help you narrow your range of choices. Do you want experience in a particular field? Then don't apply for a job that isn't in that field — you'll only be wasting your time and the time of the interviewer. Do you want to make as much money as possible? Find out what the top-paying jobs are — go to the library, call places on the phone, and ask your friends what they know. Do you just want to become more well-rounded (often a plus on college applications)? Look for a job that will give you some responsibility; lifeguarding, caring for kids, or running your own business will give you experience in areas a less responsible job might not.

Once you have your motives straightened out, you'll find you're a much more attractive candidate to a potential employer, because you can make it clear in an interview that you want that particular job, not just any job. A person with clear goals is much more likely to achieve them, which makes for a valuable employee.

The minimum age for employment in all businesses and occupations (except agriculture) is 14, but some businesses may not hire anyone under 16. There are a lot of regulations surrounding the employment of 14- and 15-year-olds, and some employers are unable or unwilling to comply with these rules. Once you're 16, no employer can discriminate against you on the basis of age. For more information on the employment laws pertaining to 14- and 15-year-olds, write or call your local office of the U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division (check the white pages of your phone book under Government for the address).

### How many hours?

Consider the hours you'd like to work, taking into account the number and kinds of things you're already doing. If you've got a fairly heavy academic or extracurricular load, look for a job that doesn't



Joey's ideal job is at CRAZ radio, where he hopes to get The Zit Remedy's tape into the right hands.

take too many hours a week, or one that will allow you to set your own schedule. Keep in mind that recent studies have shown that kids who work ten to fifteen hours a week score better on scholastic aptitude tests than kids who don't work, but kids who work twenty hours or more a week score lower than kids who don't work at all.

### Your Social Security number

Everyone needs a Social Security number in order to work — that's the law. Many people have one almost as soon as they are born; recent tax laws require everyone over the age of five to be listed by Social Security number on their parents' tax forms. If you don't know if you have one, ask your parents. If they haven't gotten one for you, get one for yourself now.

The quickest way to get one is to go down to your local Social Security office (again, consult the Government listing in the white pages of your phone book). Take your birth certificate and two other pieces of identification: a library card, school I.D., or even a video club card will

do. It usually takes four to six weeks for a card to be issued, so apply well before you start looking for a job. If that isn't possible, ask for a receipt when you go into the Social Security office. That receipt should be accepted by employers until your card comes. (You can also apply by mail, but receipts won't be issued by mail.)

### The pay

The minimum wage, set by federal law, is now \$3.35. The minimum wage may vary from state to state, but it can't be lower than the federal standard. Many places pay above minimum wage to attract the best workers, but all employers must pay at least the minimum hourly rate, regardless of the age of the employee.

There are many jobs available for teenagers. For example, you can work as an order-taker at a fast-food restaurant, salesperson, cashier, babysitter, lifeguard, caddy, and so on. Once you decide what kind of job you want, scout out possible places of employment and go for it!

Sarah Guille Kvilhaug is a freelance writer who lives in Massachusetts.

# Careers off the beaten path

By Sarah Guille Kvilhaug

Doctor, lawyer, teacher, plumber, and police officer: these are some of the jobs we all know about — the expected, conventional uses of our skills and interests. What's your best subject? English? Oh, then you must want to be an English teacher when you grow up, right? Do you like to draw? Then you must become a starving artist in an attic in Paris, right? Do you have a green thumb? Then you'll be a gardener, right?

Wrong, wrong, wrong. There are many jobs out there that you may never have heard of that are perfectly suited to your skills and interests. For instance, if you're good in English, you could become an editor at a magazine. If you draw well, you could make a living as a technical drafter. And if you like plants, you may find happiness as a landscape architect.

What follows are interviews with four people who hold jobs you may never have thought about, people who may have dreamed of playing pro baseball or writing the Great American Novel when they were kids, but who ended up being happy doing something quite different. As you will see from these interviews, no job or career choice is perfect; each of these people has something they like very much as well as something they don't like about their jobs. And there's no one

# Ready, set, go!

## Landing a job

### The application

Most places of employment require that you go through an application process to get a job. Resumes usually aren't necessary at this point. However, there is some information you'll need to know accurately, so it's a good idea to write the following on a piece of paper and keep it handy:

- Your name, address, and phone number
- The date and place of your birth
- Your Social Security number
- The address of your school and your expected graduation date
- The names, addresses, and phone numbers of at least two references (teachers, coaches, friends of your parents)

- Past work experience (Have you ever babysat? Done volunteer work?)
- Extracurricular activities and scholastic or athletic awards

Write as neatly as possible, and make sure you spell and punctuate everything correctly.

### The interview

Your behavior during an interview tells your potential employer a lot about your behavior on the job. Be on time, dress appropriately (no jeans in an office setting; heels and pantyhose are unnecessary in a lifeguard hut), be friendly and respectful. Don't mumble, and be ready to tell the interviewer why you want the job. Be prepared to ask a few questions of your own — questions that show that you've thought things through and you want this specific job for specific reasons. Some good questions: What am I expected to do? What are the hours? Is there a dress code? Is there a training period?

It's usually not considered proper to ask about pay at an initial interview if the

interviewer doesn't bring it up. If you're called back for a second interview or given the job outright, that's the time to talk about wages and benefits. If you're not offered the position by the end of the interview, ask when a decision is expected to be made. Afterwards, send a brief, neatly written (or typed) thank-you note to the person who interviewed you. This keeps your name in the interviewer's mind and shows that you follow through on a task.

### The job

Many of the rules that apply during an interview also apply on the job. Always try to be on time, dress according to the standards set by your employer, be friendly to the people you work with (fellow employees or customers), and always work your scheduled hours (or have a very good excuse). This kind of positive attitude can lead to raises, promotions, and/or a good recommendation when you're filling out a college application or starting out in a career.



"right" way to prepare for a career. Some of these people planned very carefully for a position in their chosen field, only to have it turn out to be less than they imagined; others just fell into their careers by accident and couldn't be happier.

All four people do have one thing in common: They feel the most satisfied when they are doing what they are interested in, which is usually what they are best at. Thus, one way to prepare for a career that you'll like is to concentrate on finding out what you enjoy doing. Right now that means not putting on blinders and staring down a narrow path to your goal; it means trying out a lot of different things. It's only by leaving yourself open to opportunity that you can find what it is that truly makes you happy, and only then can you find or create a career that will be right for you.

### Wendy, food stylist

"I thought I wanted to be an architect when I was 12 or 13. I used to sit in my bed and draw floorplans, because I really liked houses," says Wendy, 27, who is now a food stylist for a major metropolitan newspaper. Her job as the assistant to the food editor involves cooking all the recipes, shopping for all the accessories, and arranging the food, dishes, linens, and flowers for the photographs that appear in the newspaper.

"I got the job in a really backwards way," Wendy explains. "A friend of mine lived in the apartment below the woman who is now my boss, and knew she was looking for an assistant. My friend thought I would be perfect for the job and told me to call her."

In college, Wendy had studied social work, which did not exactly prepare her for her career, but she enjoyed cooking as a hobby. Although there are schools that offer degrees in culinary arts, it helps to know someone in the business. The best thing about her job, Wendy says, is the freedom. "I'm alone all day cooking, so my time is my own to use as I want." But that solitude is also the job's biggest drawback. "Sometimes I miss contact with people. But I do get to see people on the days we do the photographs, so I guess that's okay."

The job at the newspaper has led to food styling jobs for magazines and restaurants around town, so Wendy sees a good future for herself in the food business. "It's a very open field in the United States right now. There's a lot of interest in cooking and presentation, which is what food styling is all about. I can see myself in this particular job for a couple of years, and then going on in the food business. Maybe I'll write a cookbook someday."

### Brian, fishing vessel captain

Brian, 23, was like many kids who excel at sports in school and occasionally dream of being a professional athlete someday. But because he is an extremely practical person, he figured he wasn't going to make a living at what he calls "fantasy stuff." He decided to explore his other interests. After high school he was accepted at one of the maritime academies and prepared for a career at sea.

Today Brian is the captain of a 1,999-ton scalloping vessel. He oversees a ten-person crew for ten days at sea, making sure that everyone works their appointed watch and that the boat is running properly. In addition, he must locate and harvest the scallops.

The worst part about his job, Brian says, is the lack of contact with friends and family while he's at sea. "You're sure you're always missing something, whether you are or not." The best thing about his job? "The paycheck!" Brian enjoys the independent life of a commercial fisherman, and intends to stay in the industry, perhaps eventually becoming a "shore captain," someone who owns one or more boats and stays at home while someone else takes them out to sea.

### Ardys, commercial performer

"I wanted to be everything when I grew up. I couldn't make up my mind," says Ardys, 31. Finally she settled on doing — everything. She's a singer, an actor, and a producer. "I always knew I wanted to be a performer," she explains. "I liked acting and singing, but I had no clear idea of exactly what I wanted to do."

Ardys attended a music conservatory after high school to work on her voice, and auditioned for acting jobs when she wasn't working as a waitress. She juggled this busy schedule for ten years, until, as she puts it, "I decided to fulfill my

creative desires and live a normal life at the same time." She began to sing in commercials and act in training films for corporations. She has built a successful career out of her more commercial pursuits, which she finds something of a double-edged sword.

"I don't have a lot of creative outlets right now, and that can be a bit frustrating at times. You have to give a client whatever it is they want, which might not necessarily be what you want." But Ardys is building a good reputation, which she enjoys. "I love to sing, and am just now sort of achieving a bit of recognition, and I'm only now appreciating my own talent, instead of wanting to sound like this, that, or the other person."

### Magnar, hospital pharmacist

"I've always been interested in figuring out how things work, so I pretty much knew I'd go into one of the sciences," says Magnar, 26. He is a staff pharmacist at a hospital, where he puts his interest and knowledge of science to good use. "I don't do as much mixing and creating of drugs in the hospital as I have in other jobs. Here my duties are primarily making sure the technician mixes the intravenous solutions properly, making sure none of the patients is given drugs that could react negatively with each other, and filling the prescriptions that the doctors write. I use my knowledge of

chemistry to make sure everything having to do with the drugs administered to patients is done properly."

Magnar received his Bachelor of Science degree in a five-year program from a pharmacy college. "The best skill you can have as a pharmacist is a good memory, and my schooling helped develop that — seventy percent of a pharmacy degree is pure memorization," he says.

Magnar finds that while the pay is good and the work is interesting, his job does have its drawbacks. He is beginning to find the hospital setting boring and is thinking about moving on. "I'm not sure I intend to stay in this field; it's beginning to become a bit repetitious. If I do, I'll specialize in a part of pharmacy — consultant pharmacy, nuclear pharmacy (mixing radioactive drugs used in things like cancer treatments), or working for a drug company as a researcher or salesman."

Sarah Guille Kvilhaug is a freelance writer who lives in Massachusetts.

## Student activities

- Look at the help wanted section in your newspaper to get a sense of the kinds of jobs that are available, how much they pay, and the qualifications required. Circle any jobs that appeal to you and think about the education or training you would need to apply for them.
- Look over your local newspaper and think about how many different jobs are required to produce it (such as photographer, reporter, headline writer, and art director). Invite staff members from your local paper into your classroom to describe their jobs.

## Resources

Your local library carries many useful books about jobs and careers. In addition, the following books may be helpful.

Wright, John, *The American Almanac of Jobs and Salaries, 1987-1988 Edition*, New York: Avon Books, 1987.

Zey, Michael, *The Right Move: How to Find the Perfect Job*, New York: Franklin Watts, Inc., 1987.

Barbera-Hogan, Mary, *Straight Talk on Careers: 80 Pros Take You Into Their Professions*, Maryland: Barrett Park Books, Inc., 1987.

Vey, Violet M., *How to Find Those Hidden Jobs ... To Fit Your Experience, Your Interests, Your Talents*, Philomath, Oregon: Career Management Publications, 1986.

McAdam, Terry, *Careers in the Nonprofit Sector: Doing Well by Doing Good*, Washington, D.C.: Taft Group, 1985.



# The making of *Degrassi Junior High*

By Eve Hall and Kathryn Ellis

**LIGHTS! CAMERA! ACTION!** Is that all there is to TV? No way! Taking an idea and turning it into a television show takes a lot of time and hard work. What kind of hard work goes into *Degrassi Junior High*? To find out, read on.

## Growing up

Before *Degrassi Junior High* there was *Kids of Degrassi Street*, a Canadian television show about elementary school kids. After five years, the *Kids* producers — the people who oversee all aspects of a production, from budgets to staffing to script writing — decided that they wanted to work with a larger cast of older kids. They teamed up with a producer in the United States and hired a new staff, including a director and a writer.

## Getting it write

After the writer develops each script, the cast gathers and the actors read through their parts together. Afterwards, there is an open discussion. "I don't think my character would say something like that," one actor will say. "Kids in junior high are not as naive as you make them seem in this scene," another might add. Or, "It seems funny that the story would end this way." The writer then makes a final draft of the script, often including the changes the actors recommended.

## Ready, set, direct!

It is the director's job to make the dialogue in the script come alive. A large part of the director's work is deciding how to use the camera to shoot, or photograph, the actors. When Alexa is thinking about how much she likes Simon, for example, the director must decide whether to photograph her with a close up or a long shot from far away. The director also arranges the background of a scene, such as whether the hallway will be empty or filled with noisy students when L. D. and Spike are having a serious conversation.

The director plans these shots with the camera crew, and works with the technicians to figure out the lighting design and sound effects. One of the director's most important jobs is to rehearse with the actors, helping them to understand their characters so that they can play their roles honestly and realistically. The director also shows the actors the blocking, or how they should move on the set.

## Good shot!

Once all of the planning and rehearsals have been completed, the director, actors, production crew, and camera crew gather on set to start filming. Just like you've seen in the movies, the shoot begins

when someone steps forward with an open clapperboard and announces "Can't Live With 'Em. Scene One. Take One." The clapperboard is snapped shut, and the film starts rolling. A clapperboard is used so that later the sound tape can be matched up with the picture, since sound and pictures are recorded separately.

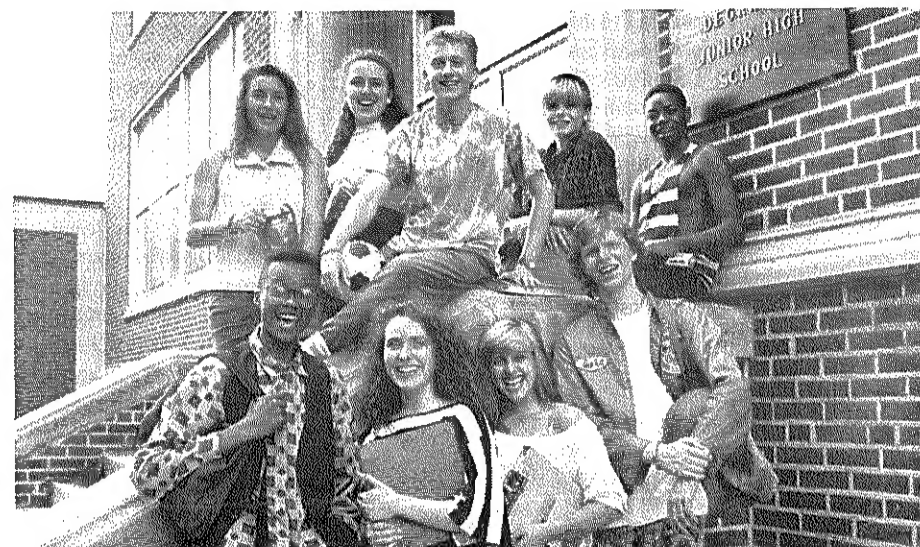
Often, many takes are needed to get a scene just right, and scenes are frequently shot from several different directions. For example, a conversation between Joey and Snake might be shot first with the

camera close up on Joey, a second time with the camera close up on Snake, and finally with the camera close up on both of them. It takes seven days to film one half-hour episode of *DJH*.

After the film is developed, it goes to an editor. With the director, the editor sorts through all of the different takes, selects the best ones, and pieces them together with a special machine. After editing is completed, music, special effects, titles, credits, and other finishing touches are added.

## Getting into the picture

Soon copies of the film are shipped off to broadcasting centers that send the shows by satellite to television stations across the country, so that they can put it on the air. All that's left now is for you to flip on the channel, sit back, and enjoy the show.



Some of the cast gathers on the steps of the school building where *Degrassi Junior High* is filmed.

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**Non-profit Organization**  
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down by the front closet. "See ya in school," he said, waving me on my way.

The screen door closed behind me, and I waited until Neil had disappeared into the house. Then I gently pulled the door open, went for his backpack, slid out his paper, and replaced it with my own.

When Merry and I ran into Neil in the hall before school the next day, his face was red with worry. "I went to take my assignment to Keating, but it's gone again!" He held out his backpack for our inspection.

Sure enough, the pages I'd put there were gone.

"Here," I said, reaching into my own backpack.

The red in his face deepened to purple. "I could kill you!" he cried. "I told you not to take it."

"But that was before I knew who the real culprit was," I said. "Once I'd figured that out, I knew that your paper would never make it out of your house."

Neil looked stumped for a moment. Then he caught on. "David?" he gasped.

Merry gasped, too.

I nodded. "Your mother's been riding him so hard," I explained, "he must be sick of being compared to you. I figured, with report cards coming up, he didn't want to be the only one bringing bad grades into the house. Better not tell your

mom," I suggested, "or she'll be putting him out with the trash."

Neil nodded sadly. "Thanks, Carter." The bell rang. He started for gym, then turned back to us. "Do you still want me to pick up that tape?"

I looked at Merry, who shook her head. "I took your not showing up with it as a sign that I should talk it over with my mom."

"Well?" I asked, waiting to hear what had happened.

"She gave in and we watched it together. It probably would've been more fun seeing it with you guys. But this way I didn't have to feel guilty."

"Do you think David is feeling guilty about what he did?" I asked Neil.

"I hope not," he said. "He's been feeling bad enough."

"What are you going to say to him?" Merry wanted to know.

The second bell rang before Neil could answer, leaving us with some suspense even after the mystery was solved. I was sure he'd work it out, though, as sure as I was that I'd be onto another case by that time.

Diana Shaw is the author of *Make the Most of a Good Thing: You!* and two mysteries featuring Carter Colborn, *Lessons in Fear* and *Gone Hollywood*.



"As watchable and potentially addictive as a prime time soap..."

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